Advaita Bodha Deepika

The Lamp of Non-Dual Knowledge



One of the few books highly spoken of by
Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi

ADVAITA BODHA DEEPIKA

[LAMP OF NON-DUAL KNOWLEDGE]



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FOREWORD

Originally Sri Shankaracharya and other great Sages had written several works like the commentary on the Vedanta *Sutras* and thus furnished the methods for those engaged in Self enquiry to accomplish their purpose.

From those, Sri Karapatra Swami later condensed the salient points into Sanskrit verse in a work of twelve chapters, called *Sri Advaita Bodha Deepika*.

Still later, some great man seems to have translated this into Tamil prose. For some unknown reasons only some eight chapters of the same are found published. They are:

1. *Adhyaropa* = Super imposition.
2. *Apavada* = Its removal.
3. *Sadhana* = The means of accomplishment.
4. *Sravana* = Hearing, reading, talking about God.
5. *Manana* = Reflecting on sravana.
6. *Vasanakshaya* = Annihilation of latencies.
7. *Sakshatkara* = Direct Realisation.
8. *Manonasa* = Extinction of the mind.

In this work the author has explained how Ignorance obscures the true nature of the Self which is non-dual only; how by its veiling aspect it covers It (the Self) with two effects — 'that It does not exist' and 'that It does not shine forth', how by its other aspect, in the shape of the mind, projecting individuals, *Iswara* and the world and presenting them as real, thus giving rise to illusion; how one fully qualified is alone fit to obtain this knowledge; how a bare scholar of the shastras cannot be fit; how enquiry is the chief means for knowledge; how this enquiry consists in hearing of, reflecting upon and contemplation of TRUTH, and Samadhi; how the indirect knowledge gained by hearing puts an end to the idea that 'It does not exist' and the direct knowledge gained by reflection, which means enquiry 'WHO I AM' and seeking within, destroys

the wrong notion that 'It does not shine forth'; how the knowledge of THOU in THAT THOU ART is identical with the knowledge of THAT; how by meditation the different latencies perishing which were the obstacles on the way and the mind which is the limiting adjunct *(upadhi)* of the individual perishes too and by the eventual unobstructed realisation of BRAHMAN (God) the Seeker becomes free from the bondage of the three kinds of *Karma* which form the cycle of births and deaths; how in truth there is neither bondage nor release for the SELF and in what way to extinguish the mind.

Thinking that this will be helpful to Seekers of Liberation Sri Ramanananda Saraswathi (formerly Munagala Venkataramiah) a devotee of Bhagavan has by the grace of Sri Ramana rendered into English the eight chapters of the work now available. The last four chapters, *Savikalpa Samadhi*, *Nirvikalpa Samadhi, Jivan Mukti,* and *Videha Mukti* not being found in Tamil, Telugu or Sanskrit Manuscripts could not be translated into English. Information on the missing chapters is earnestly sought and will be gratefully acknowledged by the publisher.

Our grateful thanks are due to H. H. Smt. Shanta Devi Maharani of Baroda and H. H. the Maharaja of Travancore for sending us the original Sanskrit Manuscripts of this work from the State Libraries for Maharshi's consultation and return.

This book is one of the few esteemed by Sri Maharshi and this translation was thoroughly revised in His Presence. So we are encouraged to present this small volume to the public with full confidence that the reader will benefit by it.

PUBLISHER.

ADVAITA BODHA DEEPIKA

OR

THE LAMP OF NON-DUAL KNOWLEDGE

INTRODUCTORY

1. I salute the holy feet of the Supreme Lord, the Refuge of all the universe, the One Means to kill the samsara (the cycle of births and deaths), the Eternal God Ganesa of elephant face!

2. I meditate on the holy master known as Chidambara Brahman, the very being of the non-dual Supreme Self, Its very Bliss and the foremost yogi among men by whose light glance I, a fool blinded by the massive darkness of beginningless Ignorance, gained the precious jewel of *Jnana* (Wisdom)!

3. I meditate on that holy master, by contact with the dust of whose lotus feet men are able easily to cross the shoreless ocean of samsara, as if it were only a span.

4-5. To those who are fitted (by all) their sins having been burnt off by austerities (practised) in several past births, their minds made pure, their intellects discriminating the real from the unreal, themselves indifferent to the pleasures of either this or the other world, their minds and senses under control, passions held down, actions given up as a worthless burden, faith firm and minds tranquil, eagerly seeking release from bondage, this work — SRI ADVAITA BODHA DEEPIKA — is presented in twelve short chapters.

6. Many different works on *Advaita* have already appeared from Masters of yore, like Sri Sankaracharya and Vidyaranya; yet as a fond parent loves to hear the broken words of the lisping child, so also good people with large hearts can read this work as well, imperfect as it may be.



CHAPTER I

ON SUPERIMPOSITION

7. Greatly afflicted by the three kinds of distress *(tapa-traya),* intensely seeking release from bondage so as to be free from this painful existence, a disciple distinguished by long practice of the four fold *sadhana,* approaches a worthy master and prays:

8-12. Lord, master, ocean of mercy, I surrender to you! Pray save me!

Master: Save you from what?

Disciple: From the fear of recurring births and deaths.

Master: Leave the samsara and fear not.

Disciple: Unable to cross this vast ocean of samsara, I fear recurring births and deaths. So I have surrendered to you. It is for you to save me!

Master: What can I do for you?

Disciple: Save me. I have no other refuge. Just as water is the only thing to put out the flames when the hair of one's head is on fire, so also a sage such as you are, is the sole refuge of people like me who are on fire from the three kinds of distress. You are free from the illusion of samsara, calm in mind and sunk deep in the incomparable Bliss of Brahman which is beginningless and endless. Certainly you can save this poor creature. Pray do!

Master: What is it to me if you suffer?

Disciple: Saints like you cannot bear to see others suffer, as a father his child. Motiveless is your love for all beings. You are the *Guru* common to all, the only boat to carry us across this ocean of samsara.

Master: Now, what makes you suffer?

Disciple: Bitten by the cruel serpent of painful samsara, I am dazed and I suffer. Master, pray save me from this burning hell and kindly tell me how I can be free.

13-17. *M.*: Well said, my Son! You are intelligent and well disciplined. There is no need to prove your competence to be a disciple. Your words clearly show that you are fit. Now look here, my child!

In the Supreme Self of Being-Knowledge-Bliss who can be the transmigrating being? How can this samsara be? What could have given rise to it? And how and whence can it arise itself? Being the non-dual Reality, how can you be deluded? With nothing separate in deep sleep, not having changed in any manner, and having slept soundly and peacefully, a fool on waking shouts out "Alas, I am lost!" How can you, the changeless, formless, Supreme, Blissful Self shout forth "I transmigrate — I am miserable!" and so on? Truly there is neither birth nor death; no one to be born or to die; nothing of the kind!

D.: What does exist then?

M.: There exists only the beginningless, endless, non-dual, never bound, ever free, pure, aware, single, Supreme, Bliss Knowledge.

18. *D.*: If so, tell me how this mighty massive delusion of samsara veils me in dense darkness like a mass of clouds in the rainy season.

19-20. *M.*: What can be said of the power of this Illusion (Maya)! As a man mistakes a post for a man, so also you mistake the non-dual, perfect Self for an individual. Being deluded you are miserable. But how does this illusion arise? Like a dream in sleep this false samsara appears in the illusion of ignorance which is itself unreal. Hence your mistake.

21-24. *D.*: What is this ignorance?

M.: Listen. In the body appears a phantom, the 'false-I', to claim the body for itself and it is called *jiva.* This *jiva* always outward bent, taking the world to be real and himself to be the doer and experiencer of pleasures and pains, desirous of this and that, undiscriminating, not once remembering his true nature, nor enquiring "Who am I?, What is this world?", is but wandering in the samsara without knowing himself. Such forgetfulness of the Self is Ignorance.

25. *D.*: All the shastras proclaim that this samsara is the handiwork of Maya but you say it is of Ignorance. How are the two statements to be reconciled?

M.: This Ignorance is called by different names such as Maya*, Pradhana, Avyakta* (the unmanifest), *Avidya,* Nature, Darkness and so on. Therefore the samsara is but the result of Ignorance.

26. *D.*: How does this ignorance project the samsara?

M.: Ignorance has two aspects: Veiling and Projection (*Avarana—Vikshepa).* From these arises the samsara. Veiling functions in two ways. In the one we say "It is not" and in the other "It does not shine forth."

27-28. *D.*: Please explain this.

M.: In a discourse between a master and a student, although the sage teaches that there is only the non-dual Reality the ignorant man thinks "What can be non-dual Reality? No. It cannot be." As a result of beginningless veiling, though taught, the teaching is disregarded and the old ideas persist. Such indifference is the first aspect of veiling.

29-30. Next, with the help of sacred books and gracious masters he unaccountably but sincerely believes in the non-dual Real, yet he cannot probe deep but remains superficial and says "The Reality does not shine forth." Here is knowledge knowing that It does not shine forth yet the illusion of ignorance persists. This illusion that It does not shine forth, is the second aspect of veiling.

31-32. *D.*: What is Projection?

M.: Though he is the unchanging, formless, Supreme, Blissful, non-dual Self, the man thinks of himself as the body with hands and legs, the doer and experiencer; objectively sees this man and that man, this thing and that thing, and is deluded. This delusion of perceiving the external universe on the non-dual Reality enveloped by it, is Projection. This is Superimposition.

33. *D.*: What is Superimposition?

M.: To mistake something which is, for something which is not — like a rope for a snake, a post for a thief, and mirage for water. The appearance of a false thing on a real is superimposition.

34. *D.*: What is here the unreal superimposition on the real thing, the substratum?

M.: The non-dual Being-Knowledge-Bliss or the Supreme Brahman is the Reality. Just as the false name and form of snake is superimposed on a rope, so also on the non-dual Reality there is superimposed the category of sentient beings and insentient things. Thus the names and forms which appear as the universe, make up the superimposition. This is the unreal phenomenon.

D.: In the Reality which is non-dual, who is there to bring about this superimposition?

M.: It is Maya.

D.: What is Maya?

35. *M.*: It is the ignorance about the aforesaid Brahman.

D.: What is this Ignorance?

M.: Though the Self is Brahman, there is not the knowledge of the Self (being Brahman). That which obstructs this knowledge of the Self is Ignorance.

D.: How can this project the world?

M.: Just as ignorance of the substratum, namely the rope, projects the illusion of a snake, so Ignorance of Brahman projects this world.

36. *M.*: It must be regarded an illusion because it is superimposed and does not exist either before (perception) or after (knowledge).

D.: How can it be said that it does not exist either before (perception) or after (knowledge)?

M.: In order to be created, it could not have been before creation (*i.e.* it comes into existence simultaneously with or after creation); in dissolution it cannot exist; now in the interval it simply appears like a magic-born city in mid air. Inasmuch as it is not seen in deep sleep, shocks and Samadhi, it follows that even now it is only a super imposition and therefore an illusion.

37. *D.*: Before creation and in dissolution if there is no world, what can exist then?

M.: There is only the basic Existence, not fictitious, non-dual, undifferentiated, *ab extra and ab intra (Sajatiya, vijatiya,* and *svagata bheda),* Being-Knowledge-Bliss, the unchanging Reality.

D.: How is it known?

M.: The Vedas say "Before creation there was only Pure Being." *Yoga Vasishta* also helps us to understand it.

D.: How?

38. *M.*: "In dissolution the whole universe is withdrawn leaving only the Single Reality which stays motionless, beyond speech and thought, neither darkness nor light, yet perfect, namely, untellable, but not void," says *Yoga Vasishta.*

39. *D.*: In such Non duality how can the universe arise?

M.: Just as in the aforesaid rope snake, the ignorance of the real substratum lies hidden in the rope, so also in the basic Reality there lies hidden Ignorance otherwise called Maya or *Avidya.* Later this gives rise to all these names and forms.

40-41. This maya which is dependent on the unrelated Knowledge-Bliss-Reality, has the two aspects of veiling and projection *(avarna* and *vikshepa);* by the former it hides its

own substratum from view, and by the latter the unmanifest maya is made manifest as *mind.* This then sports with its latencies which amounts to projecting this universe with all the names and forms.

42. *D.*: Has anyone else said this before?

M.: Yes, Vasishta to Rama.

D.: How?

43-50. *M.*: "The powers of Brahman are infinite. Among them that power becomes manifest through which it shines forth."

D.: What are those different powers?

M.: Sentience in sentient beings; movement in air; solidity in earth; fluidity in water; heat in fire; void in the ether; decaying tendency in the perishable; and many more are well known. These qualities remained unmanifest and later manifested themselves. They must have been latent in the non-dual Brahman like the glorious colours of peacock feathers in the yolk of its egg or the spread out banyan tree in the tiny seed.

D.: If all powers lay latent in the Single Brahman why did they not manifest simultaneously ?

M.: Look how the seeds of trees, plants, herbs, creepers, etc. are all contained in the earth but only some of them sprout forth according to the soil, climate and season. So also the nature and extent of powers for manifestation are determined by conditions. At the time Brahman (the substratum of all the powers of Maya), joins the power of thinking, this power manifests as *mind.* Thus Maya so long dormant suddenly starts forth as *mind* from the Supreme Brahman, the common source of all. Then this mind fashions all the universe. So says Vasishta.

51. *D.*: What is the nature of this mind which forms the power of projection of Maya?

M.: To recollect ideas or latencies is its nature. It has latencies as its content and appears in the witnessing consciousness in two modes — "I" and "This".

D.: What are these modes?

M.: They are the concept "I" and the concepts "this", "that", etc.

52. *D.*: How is this I-mode superimposed on the witnessing consciousness ?

M.: Just as silver superimposed on nacre presents the nacre as silver, so also the I-mode on the basic witness presents it as "I", i.e. the ego, as if the witness were not different from the ego but were the ego itself.

53. Just as a person possessed by a spirit is deluded and behaves as altogether a different person, so also the witness possessed by the I-mode forgets its true nature and presents itself as the ego.

54. *D.*: How can the unchanging witness mistake itself for the changing ego?

M.: Like a man in delirium feeling himself lifted in air, or a drunken man beside himself, or a madman raving incoherently, or a dreamer going on dream-journeys, or a man possessed behaving in strange ways, the witness though itself untainted and unchanged, yet under the malicious influence of the phantom ego, appears changed as "I".

55. *D.*: Does the I-mode of mind present the witness altered as the ego, or itself appear modified as the ego in the witness?

56-57. *M.*: Now this question cannot arise, for having no existence apart from the Self, it cannot manifest of itself. Therefore it must present the Self as if modified into the ego.

D.: Please explain it more.

M.: Just as the ignorance factor in the rope cannot project itself as snake but must make the rope look like a snake; that in water unable to manifest itself, makes the water manifest as

foam, bubbles and waves; that in fire, itself unable, makes the fire display itself as sparks; that in clay cannot present itself but presents the clay as a pot, so also the power in the witness cannot manifest itself but presents the witness as the ego.

58-60. *D.*: Master, how can it be said that through maya the Self is fragmented into individual egos? The Self is not related to anything else; it remains untainted and unchanged like ether. How can maya affect it? Is it not as absurd to speak of fragmentation of the Self as to say "I saw a man taking hold of ether and moulding it into a man; or fashioning air into a cask?" I am now sunk in the ocean of samsara. Please rescue me.

61. *M.*: Maya is called Maya because it can make the impossible possible. It is the power which brings into view what was not always there, like a magician making his audience see a celestial city in mid air. If a man can do this, can maya not do that? There is nothing absurd in it.

62-66. *D.*: Please make it clear to me.

M.: Now consider the power of sleep to call forth dream visions. A man lying on a cot in a closed room falls asleep and in his dream wanders about taking the shapes of birds and beasts; the dreamer sleeping in his home, the dream presents him as walking in the streets of Benares or on the sands of Setu; although the sleeper is lying unchanged yet in his dream he flies up in the air, falls headlong into an abyss, or cuts off his own hand and carries it in his hand. In the dream itself there is no question of consistency or otherwise. Whatever is seen in it appears to be appropriate and is not criticised. If simple sleep can make the impossible possible what wonder can there be in the Almighty Maya creating this indescribable universe? It is its very nature.

67-74. To illustrate it, I shall briefly tell you a story from *Yoga Vasishta.* There was once a king named Lavana, a jewel of Ikshvaku line. One day when all were assembled in the court hall, a magician appeared before him. Quickly he approached

the king, saluted and said "Your Majesty, I shall show you a wonder, look!" At once he waved a flail of peacock feathers before the king. The king was dazed, forgot himself and saw a great illusion like an extraordinary dream. He found a horse in front of him, mounted it and rode on it hunting in a forest. After hunting long, he was thirsty, could not find water and grew weary. Just then a low caste girl happened to come there with some coarse food in an earthen dish. Driven by hunger and thirst, he cast aside all restrictions of caste, and his own sense of dignity, and asked her for food and drink. She offered to oblige him only if she could be made his legitimate wife. Without hesitation he agreed, took the food given by her, and then went to her hamlet where they both lived as husband and wife and had two sons and one daughter.

All along the king remained on the throne. But in the short interval of an hour and a half, he had led another illusory life of wretchedness, extending over several years. In this way Vasishta had related several long stories to Rama in order to impress on him the wonderful play of Maya by which the impossible is easily made possible.

75-76. There is no illusion which is beyond the power of mind to spread, and no one not deluded by it. Its characteristic is to accomplish that which is impossible. Nothing can escape its power. Even the Self which is always unchanging and untainted, has been made to look changed and tainted.

D.: How can it be so?

M .: See how the sky which is impartite and untainted, looks blue. The Supreme Self too though always pure has been invested by it with the ego and is made to parade as *jiva,* just as Lavana the king lived as a low caste wretch.

77. *D.*: If the Supreme Self had by joining the I-mode of the mind become the illusory *jiva* he should appear as a single *jiva.* But there are many *jivas.* How can the single Reality manifest as innumerable *jivas?*

78-80. *M*.: As soon as the illusion of a single *jiva* becomes operative in the Pure Supreme Self, it naturally begets other illusory *jivas* in the Pure Ether of Knowledge. If a dog enters a room walled by mirrors, it first gives rise to one reflection in one mirror which by a series of reflections becomes innumerable and the dog finding itself surrounded by so many other dogs growls and shows fight. So it is with the Self of pure, non-dual Ether of Consciousness. The illusion of one *jiva is* perforce associated with illusion of several *jivas.*

81-83. Again, the habit of seeing the world as you-I-he etc., forces the dreamer to see similar illusory entities in dreams also. Similarly the accumulated habits of past births make the Self which is only pure Knowledge-Ether see numberless illusory *jivas* even now. What can be beyond the scope of Maya which is itself inscrutable? Now this done, listen to how the bodies and the spheres were created.

84-85. Just as the Supreme Self is presented as "I" by the I-mode of Maya, so also It is presented by the 'this' mode as this universe with all its contents.

D.: How?

M.: The power of multiplicity is the 'this' mode whose nature is to be imagining 'this' and 'that'. In the Ether of Consciousness it recollects the millions of latencies, as 'this' and 'that'. Being stirred up by these latencies, the *jiva* though itself the Ether of consciousness, now manifests as the individual body etc., the external worlds and the diversities.

D.: How?

86-89. *M*.: First, mind appears in the impartite Ether of Consciousness. Its movements form the aforesaid latencies which show forth in various illusory forms, such as "here is the body with organs and limbs" — "I am this body" — "here is my father" — "I am his son" — "my age is such and such" — "these are our relatives and friends" — "this is our house" — "I

and you" — "this and that" — "good and bad" — "pleasure and pain" — "bondage and release" — "castes, creeds and duties" — "Gods, men and other creatures" — "high, low and middling" — "enjoyer and enjoyments" — "many millions of spheres" — and so on.

D.: How can the latencies themselves appear as this vast universe?

90. *M.*: A man remaining unmoving and happy in deep sleep, when stirred up by the rising latencies, sees illusory dream visions of creatures and worlds; they are nothing but the latencies in him. So in the waking state also he is deluded by the latencies manifesting as these creatures and worlds.

91. *D.*: Now, master, the dream is but the reproduction of mental impressions formed in the waking state and lying dormant before. They reproduce past experiences. Therefore dream-visions are rightly said to be only mental creations. Should the same be true of the waking world, this must be the reproduction of some past impressions. What are those impressions which give rise to these waking experiences?

92. *M.*: Just as the experiences of the waking state give rise to the dream world, so also the experiences of past lives give rise to this world of the waking state, nonetheless illusory.

D.: If the present experience is the result of the preceding one, what gave rise to its preceding one?

M.: That was from its preceding one and so on.

D.: This can extend back to the time of creation. In dissolution all these impressions must have been resolved. What was left there to start the new creation?

M.: Just as your impressions gathered one day lie dormant in deep sleep and become manifest the following day, so also the impressions of the preceding cycle *(kalpa)* reappear in the succeeding one. Thus these impressions of Maya have no beginning, but appear over and over again.

93. *D.*: Master, what was experienced on previous days can now be remembered. Why do we not remember the experiences of past lives?

94-95. *M.*: This cannot be. See how the waking experiences repeat themselves in the dream but are not apprehended in the same way as in the waking state, but differently. Why? Because sleep makes all the difference, in as much as it hides the original bearings and distorts them, so that the same experience repeated in the dream is differently set, often aberrant and wobbling. Similarly the experiences of past lives have been affected by comas and deaths so that the present setting is different from the past ones and the same experience repeated in a different way cannot recall the past.

96. *D.*: Master, dream visions being only mental creations are transient and are soon dismissed as unreal. So they are properly said to be illusory. On the contrary the waking world is seen to be lasting and all evidence goes to show that it is real. How can it be classified with dreams as being illusory?

97-98. *M.*: In the dream itself, the visions are experienced as proven and real; they are not at that time felt to be unreal. Similarly at the time of experience, this waking world also seems to be proven and real. But when you wake up to your true nature, this will also pass off as unreal.

D.: What then is the difference between the dream and waking states?

99. *M.*: Both are only mental and illusory. There can be no doubt of this. Only the waking world is a long drawn out illusion and the dream a short one. This is the only difference and nothing more.

100. *D.*: Should waking be only a dream, who is the dreamer here?

M.: All this universe is the dream product of the non-dual, untainted, Knowledge Bliss only.

D.: But a dream can happen only in sleep. Has the Supreme Self gone to sleep in order to see this dream?

M.: Our sleep corresponds to Its Ignorance which hides Its real nature from time immemorial. So It dreams the dream of this universe. Just as the dreamer is deluded into thinking himself the experiencer of his dreams, so also the unchanging Self is by illusion presented as a *jiva* experiencing this samsara.

101. On seeing the dreamlike body, senses, etc., the *jiva* is deluded into the belief that he is the body, senses, etc.; with them he turns round and round through the waking, dream and deep sleep states. This forms his samsara.

102-104. *D*.: What is *jagrat* (the waking state)?

M.: It is the phenomenon of the I-mode along with all the other modes of mind and the related objects. Taking on I-ness in the gross body of the waking state, the individual goes by the name of *visva,* the experiencer of the waking state.

D.: What is dream?

M.: After the senses are withdrawn from external activities the impressions formed by the mental modes of the waking state reproduce themselves as visions in dreams. The experiencer of this subtle state is known as the *taijasa.*

D.: What is deep sleep *(sushupti)?*

M.: When all the mental modes lie dormant in causal ignorance, it is said to be deep sleep. Here the experiencer known as *prajna* has the bliss of Self.

105. The *jiva* revolves in this merry-go-round owing to the operation of his past karma according as it bestows waking, dream or deep sleep experience. This is samsara. In the same way the *jiva* is subject to births and deaths as a result of past karma.

106. Nevertheless they are merely appearances of the deluded mind and not real. He seems to be born and to die.

D.: How can birth and death be illusory?

M.: Listen carefully to what I say.

107-109. Just as when *jiva* is overcome by sleep, the bearings of the waking state give place to new ones of dream in order to reproduce past experiences, or there is total loss of all external things and mental activities, so also when he is overpowered by coma before death the present bearings are lost and the mind lies dormant. *This is death.* When the mind resumes the reproduction of past experiences in new settings, the phenomenon is called *birth.* The process of birth starts with the man's imagining "Here is my mother; I lie in her womb; my body has those limbs." Then he imagines himself born into the world, and later says "This is my father; I am his son; my age is such and such; these are my relatives and friends; this fine house is mine" and so on. This series of new illusions begin with the loss of former illusions in the coma before death, and depends upon the results of past actions.

110-113. The *jiva* overpowered by the unreal coma before death has different illusions according to his different past actions. After death, he believes "Here is heaven; it is very lovely, I am in it; I am now a wonderful celestial being; so many charming celestial damsels are at my service; I have nectar for drink," or, "Here is the region of Death; here is the God of Death; these are the messengers of Death; oh! they are so cruel — they pitch me into hell!" or, "Here is the region of the *pitrs;* or of Brahma; or of Vishnu; or of Shiva" and so on. Thus according to their nature, the latencies of past karma present themselves before the Self, who remains always the unchanging Ether of Consciousness, as illusions of birth, death, passage to heaven, hell or other regions. They are only delusions of the mind and not real.

114. In the Self of the Ether of Consciousness, there is the phenomenon of the universe, like a celestial city seen in mid air. It is fancied to be real but is not indeed so. Names and forms make it up and it is nothing more.

115. *D.*: Master, not only I but all others directly experience this world of sentient beings and insentient things and take it as proven and real. How is it said to be unreal?

116. *M.*: The world with all its contents is only superimposed upon the Ether of Consciousness.

D.: By what is it superimposed?

M.: By Ignorance of the Self.

D.: How is it superimposed ?

M.: As a painting of sentient beings and insentient things presents a scene upon a background.

117. *D.*: Whereas the scriptures declare that all this universe was created by the will of *Isvara*, you say it is by one's own ignorance. How can these two statements be reconciled?

118. *M.*: There is no contradiction. What the scriptures say that *Isvara,* by means of Maya, created the five elements and mixed them up in diverse ways to make the diversities of the universe, is all false.

D.: How can the scriptures say what is false?

M.: They are guides to the ignorant and do not mean what appears on the surface.

D.: How is that?

M.: Man having forgotten his true nature of being the all perfect Ether of Consciousness, is deluded by Ignorance into identifying himself with a body, etc., and regarding himself as an insignificant individual of mean capacity. If to him it is told that he is the creator of the whole universe, he will flout the idea and refuse to be guided. So coming down to his level the scriptures posit an *Isvara* as the creator of the universe. But it is not the truth. However the scriptures reveal the truth to the competent seeker. You are now mistaking the nursery tale for metaphysical truth. In this connection you may remember the child's tale in *Yoga Vasishta.*

119-134. *D.*: What is it?

M.: It is a fine story to illustrate the emptiness of this universe. On hearing it the false notions of the world being real and its creation by *Isvara*, will all disappear. Briefly put, the story runs as follows:-

A child asked its nurse to tell an interesting story. Accordingly she told the following:

Nurse: Once upon a time a most powerful king whose mother was barren, ruled over all the three worlds. His word was law to all the kings in these worlds. The barren mother's son had extraordinary powers of illusion to make, foster and unmake worlds. At his will he could take on any one of the three bodies, white, yellow or black. When he took on the yellow body, he had an urge and would, like a magician, create a city.

Child: Where is that city?

Nurse: It hangs in mid air.

Child: What is it called?

Nurse: Total Unreality.

Child: How is it built up?

Nurse: It has fourteen royal roads, each divided into three sections in which there are respectively many pleasure gardens, huge mansions and seven luxurious tanks — adorned with strings of pearls. Two lamps – one warm and the other cool — always light the city. In it the barren mother's son built many fine houses, some on high, some in the middle and others on low ground. Each of them has a black velvety top, nine gateways, several windows to let in breeze, five lamps, three white pillars, and walls plastered nicely. By his magic he created fearsome phantoms, one to guard each house. As a bird enters its nest, he enters any of these houses at his will and sports at his pleasure.

135-140. With his black body, he protects these homes through the phantom guards. With his white body he instantaneously reduces them to ashes. This barren woman's son who like a fool repeatedly produces, protects and destroys the

city at his whim, was once tired after his work, refreshed himself bathing in the quaffing waters of mirage and proudly wore flowers gathered from the sky. I have seen him; he will soon come here to present you with four strings of gems made from the lustre of broken fragments of glass and anklets of nacre-silver.

The child believed the tale and was pleased. So it is with the fool who takes this world to be real.

141-148. *D.*: How does this story illustrate the point?

M.: The child of the legend is the ignorant man of the world; the wet nurse is the scripture which speaks of the creation by *Isvara*; the barren mother's son is the *Isvara* born of Maya; his three bodies are the three qualities of Maya; his assumption of the bodies is the aspect of Brahma, Vishnu or Rudra. In the yellow body Brahma who is the thread running through the whole universe, creates it in the Ether of Consciousness which corresponds to mid air in the fable; its name is Absolute Unreality; the fourteen royal roads are the fourteen worlds; the pleasure gardens are the forests; the mansions are the mountain ranges; the two lamps are the Sun and the Moon and the luxurious tanks adorned with strings of pearls are the oceans into which so many rivers flow.

149-155. The houses built on the high, middle and low ground, are the bodies of the celestials, men and animals; the three white pillars are the skeleton of bones; and the plaster on the walls is the skin; the black top is the head with hair on it; the nine gateways are the nine passages in the body; the five lamps are the five senses and the phantom watchman is the ego.

Now *Isvara,* the king who is the son of the barren mother Maya, having built the houses of the bodies, enters into them at will as the *Jivas,* sports in the company of the phantom egos and moves about aimlessly.

156-160. With the black body he functions as Vishnu otherwise *Virat,* and sustains the universe. With the white body

as Rudra the Destroyer, the In-dweller in all, he withdraws the whole universe into himself. This is his sport and he is pleased with it. This pleasure is said to be the king's refreshing himself in the waters of mirage. His pride is of his sovereignty. The blossoms from the sky are the attributes, omniscience and omnipotence. The anklets are heaven and hell; the four strings of glass lustre are the four stages of *Mukti* — *Salokya, Samipya, Sarupya* and *Sayujya,* meaning equality in rank, condition or power and final identity. The king's expected arrival to present the gifts is the image worship — which fulfils the prayers of the devotees.

In this manner the ignorant student of the scriptures is deluded by his Ignorance into believing the world to be real.

161. *D*.: Should heaven and hell and the four stages of beatitude *(Mukti)* be all false, why should a part of the scriptures prescribe methods of gaining heaven or beatitude?

162-164. *M*.: On seeing her child suffer from pain in the stomach a fond mother desirous of administering pepper to the child, but aware of the child's dislike of pepper and love of honey, gently coaxes the child with a smear of honey before forcing the pepper into its mouth. In the same way the scriptures in their mercy, seeing the ignorant student suffer in the world, desirous of making him realise the truth, but knowing his love for the world and dislike of the non-dual Reality — which is subtle and hard to understand, gently coax him with the sweet pleasures of heaven, etc., before laying bare the non-dual Reality.

165. *D*.: How can the ideas of heaven, etc., lead him on to the non-dual Reality?

M.: By right actions, heaven is gained; by austerities and devotion to Vishnu, the four stages of beatitude. On knowing it a man practises what he likes among these. By repeated practices in several rebirths his mind becomes pure and turns away from sense enjoyments to receive the highest teaching of the non-dual Reality.

166. *D.*: Master, admitting heaven, hell, etc. to be false, how can *Isvara* so often mentioned by the scriptures, be also declared unreal?

167. *M.*: Well, passages dealing with *Isvara* in all His glory, are succeeded by others which say that *Isvara* is the product of Maya, and the *jiva* of Ignorance *(Avidya).*

D.: Why do the scriptures contradict themselves with passages of different imports?

M.: Their aim is to make the student purify his mind by his own efforts such as good actions, austerities and devotion. To coax him, these are said to yield him pleasures. Being themselves insentient, these cannot of their own accord yield fruits. So an all-powerful *Isvara* is said to dispense the fruits of actions. That is how an *Isvara* appears on the scene. Later the scriptures say that the *jiva, Isvara* and the *jagrat* (world) are all equally false.

168. *Isvara* the product of illusion is no more real than the dream subject, the product of sleep. He is in the same category as the *jiva,* the product of ignorance, or of the dream subject, the product of sleep.

169-174. *D.*: The scriptures say that *Isvara* is the product of Maya and how can we say that He is of Ignorance?

M.: The Ignorance of the Self may function singly or totally as we speak of single trees or a whole forest. The total Ignorance of all the universe is called Maya. Its product *Isvara* functions as *Virat* in the universal waking state; as *Hiranyagarbha* in the universal dream state, and as the In-dweller in the universal deep sleep. He is omniscient and omnipotent. Beginning with the Will to create and ending with the entry into all creatures, this is His samsara. The individual ignorance is said to be simply ignorance. Its product the *jiva* functions respectively as *visva*, *taijasa* and *prajna* in the individual waking, dream and deep sleep states. His knowledge and capacity are limited. He is said

to be doer and enjoyer. His samsara consists of all that lies between the present wakeful activities and final Liberation. In this way the scriptures have made it clear that *Isvara*, the *jiva* and the *jagat* are all illusory.

175-179. *D.*: Now, master, just as the ignorance of the rope can give rise to the illusion only of a snake, so one's ignorance may spread the illusion of oneself being a *jiva*. But how can it be extended to create the illusions of *Isvara* and *jagat* as well?

M.: Ignorance has no parts; it acts as a whole and produces all the three illusions at the same time. The *jiva* manifesting in the waking and dream states, *Isvara* and *jagat* also manifest. As the *jiva* is resolved, the others are also resolved. This is proved by our experience of the waking and dream manifestations, and their disappearance in deep sleep, swoons, death and *samadhi*.

Moreover simultaneous with the final annihilation of *jiva*-hood by knowledge the others also are finally annihilated along with it. The sages whose ignorance has completely been lost with all its attendant illusions and who are aware only as the Self, directly experience the non-dual Reality. Hence it is clear that the Ignorance of the Self is the root cause of all the three illusions — *jiva, jagat* and *Isvara*.

180. *D.*: Master, should *Isvara* be the illusion of Ignorance, He must manifest as such. Instead He appears as the origin of the universe and our creator. It does not look reasonable to say that *Isvara* and the *jagat* are both illusory products. Instead of appearing as our creation, He appears as our creator. Is it not contradictory?

181-183. *M.*: No. In dreams the dreamer sees his father who was long ago dead. Though the father is created by himself as an illusion of dream, the dreamer feels that the other is the father and himself the son, and that he has inherited the father's

property which again is his own creation. Now look how the dreamer creates individuals and things relates himself to them and thinks that they were before and he came after. So also with the *Isvara*, the *jagat* and the *jiva*. This is only the trick of Maya who can make the impossible possible.

D.: How is Maya so powerful?

M.: No wonder. See how an ordinary magician can make a whole audience see a celestial city in mid air or how you can yourself create a wonderful world of your own in your dreams. If such is possible for individuals of mean powers, how can the other not be possible for Maya which is the universal material cause? To conclude, all these including *Isvara*, *jiva* and *jagat* are illusory appearances resulting from one's ignorance and superimposed on the One Reality, the Self.

This leads us to consider the ways of removing the superimposition.



CHAPTER II

APAVADA

THE REMOVAL OF SUPERIMPOSITION

1. *D.*: Master, Ignorance is said to have no beginning; it follows that it will have no end. How can the beginningless Ignorance be dispelled? Being the ocean of mercy you can please tell me this.

2. *M.*: Yes, my child; you are intelligent and can understand subtle things. You have said right. Truly Ignorance has no beginning, but it has an end. It is said that the rise of knowledge is the end of Ignorance. Just as the sunrise dispels the darkness of night so also the light of knowledge dispels the darkness of Ignorance.

3-4. To avoid confusion, everything in the world can be considered by analysing its individual characteristics under the categories: cause, nature, effect, limit and fruit. But the transcendental Reality being non-dual is beyond all these whereas all else, from Maya onwards, being wrongly seen on It, are subject to the above analysis.

5. Of these, Maya has no antecedent cause because it is not the product of anything preceding it, but remains in Brahman, self evident and without beginning. Before creation there could be no cause for its manifestation, yet it manifests and it must be by itself.

6. *D.*: Is there any authority for this statement?

M.: Yes, Vasishta's words. He says: Just as bubbles spontaneously arise in water so also the power to manifest names and forms rose up from the all powerful and perfect transcendental Self.

7-9. *D.*: Maya cannot but have a cause. Just as clay cannot become a pot without the agency of a potter so also the Power all along remaining unmanifest in Brahman can manifest only with *Isvara's* will.

M.: In dissolution there remains only the non-dual Brahman and no *Isvara*. Clearly there cannot be His will. When it is said that in dissolution all are withdrawn from manifestation and remain unmanifest, it means that the *jivas,* all the universe, and *Isvara* have all become unmanifest. The unmanifest *Isvara* cannot exercise His will. What happens is this: just as the dormant power of sleep displays itself as dream, so also the dormant power of Maya displays itself as this plurality, consisting of *Isvara*, His will, the universe and the *jivas. Isvara* is thus the product of Maya and He cannot be the origin of His origin. Maya therefore has no antecedent cause. In dissolution there remains only Pure Being devoid of will, and admitting of no change. In creation Maya hitherto remaining unmanifest in this Pure Being, shines forth as the mind. By the play of mind, plurality appears as *Isvara*, the worlds and the *jivas,* like magic. Maya manifest is creation, and Maya unmanifest is dissolution. Thus of its own accord, Maya appears or withdraws itself and has thus no beginning. Therefore we say there was no antecedent cause for it.

10-11. *D.*: What is its nature?

M.: It is inexpressible. Because its existence is later invalidated, it is not real; because it is factually experienced, it is not unreal; nor can it be a mixture of the two opposites the real and the unreal. Therefore the wise say that it is indescribable *(anirvachaniya).*

D.: Now what is real and what is unreal?

M.: That which is the substratum of Maya, Pure Being or Brahman, admitting of no duality, is real. The illusory phenomenon, consisting of names and forms, and called the universe, is unreal.

D.: What can Maya be said to be?

M.: Neither of the two. It is different from the real substratum and also from the unreal phenomenon.

D.: Please explain this.

12-17. *M.*: Say there is fire; it is the substratum. The sparks fly off from it. They are the modifications of fire. The sparks are not seen in the fire itself, but come out of it. An observation of this phenomenon makes us infer a power inherent in fire which produces the sparks.

Clay is the substratum; a hollow sphere with a neck and open mouth is made out of it, and is called a pot. This fact makes us infer a power which is neither clay nor pot but different from both.

Water is the substratum; bubbles are its effects; a power different from both is inferred.

A snake egg is the substratum and a young snake is the product; a power different from the egg and the young snake is inferred.

A seed is the substratum and the sprout, its product; a power different from the seed and the sprout is inferred.

The unchanging *jiva* of deep sleep is the substratum and dream is the effect; a power different from the *jiva* and the dream is inferred after waking up from sleep.

In the same way the power laying latent in Brahman produces the illusion of the *jagat.* The substratum of this power is Brahman and the *jagat* is its effect. This power cannot be either of them, but must be different from both. It cannot be defined. However it exists. But it remains inscrutable. Therefore we say the 'nature' of Maya is indescribable.

18-20. *D.*: What is the 'effect' of Maya?

M.: It consists in presenting the illusion of the *jiva, Isvara* and *jagat* on the non-dual substratum of Brahman, by virtue of its veiling and projecting powers.

D.: How?

M.: As soon as the power lying dormant shows forth as mind, the latencies of the mind sprout forth and grow up like trees which together form the universe. The mind sports with its latencies; they rise up as thoughts and materialise as this universe, which is thus only a dream vision. The *jivas* and *Isvara* being its contents are as illusory as this day dream.

D.: Please explain their illusory character.

M.: The world is an object and seen as the result of the sport of mind. The *jivas* and *Isvara* are contained in it. Parts can be only as real as the whole. Suppose the universe is painted in colours on a wall. The *jivas* and *Isvara* will be figures in the painting. The figures can be only as real as the painting itself.

21-24. Here the universe is itself a product of the mind and *Isvara* and the *jivas* form parts of the same product. Therefore they must be only mental projections and nothing more. This is clear from the *Sruti* which says that Maya gave rise to the illusions of *Isvara* and the *jivas,* and from the *Vasishta smriti* where Vasishta says that as if by magic the latencies dance about in the mind as, he-I-you-this-that-my son-property etc.

25-27. *D*.: Where does this *smriti* speak of *Isvara*, *jiva* and *jagat?*

M.: In its statement *Sohamidam, i.e.*, He-I-this, 'He' means the unseen *Isvara*; 'I' means the *jiva* parading as the ego, the doer etc.; 'this' means all the objective Universe. From scriptures, reasoning and experience *(sruti yukti anubhava)* it is clear that the *jiva, Isvara* and *jagat* are only mental projections.

28-29. *D*.: How do reasoning and experience support this view?

M.: With the rise of mind in waking and dream, the latencies come into play, and the *jiva, Isvara* and *jagat* appear. With the subsidence of the latencies in deep sleep, swoon etc., they all disappear. This is within the experience of everyone.

Again when all the latencies are rooted out by knowledge, the *jivas, Isvara* and the *jagat* disappear once for all. This is within the experience of perfectly clear-sighted great sages established in the non-dual Reality, beyond the *jivas, Isvara* and *jagat.* Therefore we say that these are all projections of the mind. Thus is explained the effect of Maya.

30-32. *D.*: What is the limit of Maya?

M.: It is the knowledge resulting from an enquiry into the sense of the *Mahavakya.* Because Maya is Ignorance, and Ignorance subsists on non enquiry. When non enquiry gives place to enquiry, right knowledge results and puts an end to Ignorance.

Now listen. Ailments in the body are the results of past karma; they subsist on wrong diet and increase with its continuation. Or, the ignorance of rope, so long as it is not enquired into, projects a snake into view and other hallucinations follow in its wake. In the same manner although Maya is self- evident, beginningless and spontaneous, yet it subsists in the absence of enquiry into the nature of the Self, manifests the universe etc., and grows more massive.

33-35. With the rise of enquiry, Maya hitherto grown strong by its absence, loses its nourishment and gradually withers away with all its effects, namely the *jagat* etc. Just as in the absence of enquiry the ignorance factor of rope made it look a snake but suddenly disappeared with the rise of enquiry, so also maya flourishes in ignorance and disappears with the rise of enquiry. Just as the rope snake and the power which produces this illusion persist before enquiry, but after enquiry end in simple rope, so also Maya and its effect, the *jagat,* persist before enquiry, but end in pure Brahman afterwards.

36-38. *D.*: How can a single thing appear in two different ways?

M.: Brahman, the non-dual-Pure-Being, presents itself as the *jagat* before enquiry, and shows itself in Its true form after enquiry.

See how before proper consideration clay appears a pot and afterwards as clay only; or gold appears as ornaments and then is found to be only gold. Similarly with Brahman too. After enquiry Brahman is realised to be unitary, non-dual, impartite, and unchanged in the past, present or future. In It there is nothing like Maya, or its effect, such as the *jagat.* This realisation is known as the Supreme Knowledge and the limit of Ignorance. Thus is described the 'limit' of Maya.

39. *D.*: What is the 'fruit' of Maya?

M.: That it fruitlessly vanishes into nothing, is its fruit. A hare's horn is mere sound having no significance. So it is with Maya, mere sound without any meaning. Realised sages have found it so.

40-43. *D.*: Then why do not all agree on this point?

M.: The ignorant believe it to be real. Those who are thoughtful will say it is indescribable. Realised sages say that it is non existent like the hare's horn. It thus appears in these three ways. People will speak of it from their own points of view.

D.: Why do the ignorant consider it real?

M.: Even when a lie is told to frighten a child, that there is a spirit, the child believes it to be true. Similarly the ignorant are dazed by Maya and believe it to be real. Those who enquire into the nature of the Real Brahman and of the unreal *jagat* in the light of the scriptures, finding Maya different from either and unable to determine its nature, say it is indescribable. But sages who had attained Supreme Knowledge through enquiry, say, "Like a mother burnt down to ashes by her daughter, Maya reduced to ashes by Knowledge is non existent at any time."

44-46. *D.*: How can Maya be compared to a mother burnt down to ashes by her daughter?

M.: In the process of enquiry, Maya becomes more and more transparent and turns into Knowledge. Knowledge is thus born of Maya, and is therefore said to be the daughter of Maya.

Maya so long flourishing on non-enquiry comes to its last days on enquiry. Just as a crab brings forth its young only to die itself, so also in the last days of enquiry Maya brings forth Knowledge for its own undoing. Immediately the daughter, Knowledge, burns her down to ashes.

D.: How can the progeny kill the parent?

M.: In a bamboo forest, the bamboos move in the wind, rub against one another and produce fire which burns down the parent trees. So also Knowledge born of Maya burns Maya to ashes. Maya remains only in name like a hare's horn. Therefore the sages declare it non existent. Moreover, the very name implies its unreality. The names are *Avidya* and *Maya.* Of these the former means 'Ignorance or that which is not' (या न विद्यते सा अविद्या); again, 'Maya is that which is not' (या मा सा माया). Therefore it is simple negation. Thus that it fruitlessly vanishes into nothing is its 'fruit'.

47-49. *D.*: Master, Maya turns into Knowledge. Therefore it cannot be said to vanish fruitlessly as nothing.

M.: Only if the Knowledge, the modified Maya, be real, Maya can be said to be real. But this Knowledge is itself false. Therefore Maya is false.

D.: How is Knowledge said to be false?

M.: The fire from the friction of the trees burns them down and then dies out; the clearing nut carries down the impurities of water and itself settles down with them. Similarly this Knowledge destroys Ignorance and itself perishes. Since it is also finally resolved, the 'fruit' of Maya can be only unreal.

50-52. *D.*: Should Knowledge also vanish in the end, how can samsara*,* the effect of Ignorance, be eradicated?

M.: Samsara*,* the effect of Ignorance, is unreal like Knowledge. One unreality can be undone by another unreality.

D.: How can it be done?

53. *M.*: A dream subject's hunger is satisfied by dream-food. The one is unreal as the other and yet serves the purpose.

Similarly, though Knowledge is unreal, yet it serves the purpose. Bondage and release are only false ideas of Ignorance. As the appearance and disappearance of rope snake are equally false, so are also bondage and release in Brahman.

54-55. To conclude, the Supreme Truth is only the non-dual Brahman. All else is false and does not exist at any time. The *srutis* support it saying "Nothing is created or destroyed; there is no bondage or deliverance; no one is bound or desirous of release; there is no aspirant, no practiser and no one liberated. This is the Supreme Truth." Removal of Superimposition thus consists in the knowledge of non-dual Reality, Pure Being, beyond Maya and its effects. Its realisation is Liberation while alive in the body *(Jivanmukti).*

56. Only a careful student of this chapter can be desirous of knowing the process of enquiry into the Self as a means of undoing the superimposition of Ignorance. The seeker fit for such enquiry must possess the four fold qualities which will be dealt with in the next chapter. Then the method of enquiry will be dealt with.

A competent seeker must carefully study these two chapters before proceeding further.



CHAPTER III

SADHANA

THE MEANS OF ACCOMPLISHMENT

1. To the question "How can there be samsara for the Supreme Self of Being-Knowledge-Bliss?", the sages answer "When unmanifest, the power of the Self is called Maya, and when manifest, the same is mind. This mode of Maya, the inscrutable Mind, is the sprout of samsara for the self".

D.: Who has said that mind is indescribable?

2-3. *M.*: Vasishta has said to Rama. In the non-dual Consciousness the *bhava* which, different from knowledge that is real and different from insentience that is unreal, tending to create, projects the latencies as this thing and that thing, mixes together the conscious and unconscious, and makes them appear under the categories, "the sentient" and "the insentient", itself of the nature of both the sentient and insentient; always vacillating and changeful is mind. Therefore it is indescribable.

4. Though itself unchanging, the Supreme Self associated with the wrongly superimposed mind, appears to be changeful.

D.: How is that?

M.: Just as a Brahmin who is drunk, behaves strangely when in the power of liquors, so too the Self though unchanged by nature, associated now with mind, appears changed as the *jiva* wallowing in this samsara. Hence, the Self's samsara is not other than mind. The *srutis* say so.

5. Mind being the samsara, must be investigated. Associated with mind which according to its modes assumes the shapes of objects, the man seems to undergo the same changes. This eternal secret is disclosed in the *Maitryiniya Upanishad*. This also is

confirmed by our experience and by positive and negative induction.

6-7. *D.*: How is it confirmed by our experience?

M.: When in deep sleep the mind lies quiescent, the Self remains without change and without samsara. When in dream and waking, the mind manifests, the Self seems changed and caught up in the samsara. Everyone knows it by experience. It is evident from *sruti, smriti,* logic and experience that this samsara is nothing but mind itself. How can any one dispute this point which is so obvious?

8-9. *D.*: How does association with mind entangle the Self in samsara?

M.: Mind whose nature is always to be thinking of this and that, functions in the two modes — the 'I' mode and 'this' mode, as already mentioned in Chapter I on Superimposition. Of these two, the I-mode has always the single concept 'I', whereas the this-mode varies according to the quality operating at the time, *satva, rajas* or *tamas, i.e.*, clearness, activity or dullness.

D.: Who has said so before?

10-11. *M.*: Sri Vidyaranyaswami has said that the mind has these qualities, *satva, rajas* and *tamas* and changes accordingly. In *satva,* dispassion, peace, beneficence, etc., manifest; in *rajas,* desire, anger, greed, fear, efforts, etc., manifest; in *tamas,* sloth, confusion, dullness, etc.

12-14. Unchanged Pure Knowledge by nature, the Supreme Self when associated with the mind changing according to the operative qualities, becomes identified with it.

D.: How can that be?

M.: You see how water is of itself cold and tasteless. Yet by association, it can be hot, sweet, bitter, sour, etc. Similarly the Self, by nature Being-Knowledge-Bliss, when associated with the I-mode, appears as the ego. Just as cold water in union with heat becomes hot, so also the Blissful Self in union with

the 'I'- mode becomes the misery-laden ego. Just as water, originally tasteless, becomes sweet, bitter or sour according to its associations, so also the Self of Pure Knowledge appears dispassionate, peaceful, beneficent, or passionate, angry, greedy, or dull and indolent, according to the quality of the this-mode at the moment.

15. The *sruti* says that the Self associated with prana, etc., appears respectively as prana, mind, intellect, the earth and the other elements, desire, anger, dispassion, etc.

16. Accordingly associated with the mind, the Self seems changed to *jiva,* sunk in the misery of endless samsara, being deluded by innumerable illusions, like I, you, it, mine, yours, etc.

17. *D.*: Now that samsara has fallen to the lot of the Self, how can it be got rid of?

M.: With complete stillness of mind, samsara will disappear root and branch. Otherwise there will be no end to samsara, even in millions of aeons *(Kalpakotikala).*

18. *D.*: Cannot samsara be got rid of by any means other than making the mind still?

M.: Absolutely by no other means; neither the Vedas, nor the shastras nor austerities, nor karma, nor vows, nor gifts, nor recital of scriptures of mystic formulae *(*mantras*),* nor worship, nor anything else, can undo the samsara. Only stillness of mind can accomplish the end and nothing else.

19. *D.*: The scriptures declare that only Knowledge can do it. How then do you say that stillness of the mind puts an end to samsara?

M.: What is variously described as Knowledge, Liberation, etc., in the scriptures, is but stillness of mind.

D.: Has any one said so before?

20-27. *M.*: Sri Vasishta had said: When by practice the mind stands still, all illusions of samsara disappear, root and branch. Just as when the ocean of milk was churned for its

nectar, it was all rough, but became still and clear after the churn (viz., mount Mandara) was taken out, so also the mind becoming still, the samsara falls to eternal rest.

D.: How can the mind be brought to stillness?

M.: By dispassion, abandoning all that is dear to oneself, one can by one's efforts accomplish the task with ease. Without this peace of mind, Liberation is impossible. Only when the whole objective world is wiped out clean by a mind disillusioned as a consequence of discerning knowledge that all that is not Brahman is objective and unreal, the Supreme Bliss will result. Otherwise in the absence of peace of mind, however much an ignorant man may struggle and creep on in the deep abyss of the shastras, he cannot gain Liberation.

Only that mind which by practice of yoga, having lost all its latencies, has become pure and still like a lamp in a dome well protected from breeze, is said to be dead. This death of mind is the highest fulfilment. The final conclusion of all the Vedas is that Liberation is nothing but mind stilled.

For Liberation nothing can avail, not wealth, relatives, friends, karma consisting of movements of the limbs, pilgrimage to sacred places, baths in sacred waters, life in celestial regions, austerities however severe, or anything but a still mind. In similar strain many sacred books teach that Liberation consists in doing away with the mind. In several passages in the *Yoga Vasishta,* the same idea is repeated, that the Bliss of Liberation can be reached only by wiping out the mind, which is the root cause of samsara, and thus of all misery.

28. In this way to kill the mind by a knowledge of the sacred teaching, reasoning and one's own experience, is to undo the samsara. How else can the miserable round of births and deaths be brought to a standstill? And how can freedom result from it? Never. Unless the dreamer awakes, the dream does not come to an end nor the fright of being face to face with a tiger

in the dream. Similarly unless the mind is disillusioned, the agony of samsara will not cease. Only the mind must be made still. This is the fulfilment of life.

29-30. *D*.: How can the mind be made still?

M.: Only by *Sankhya. Sankhya* is the process of enquiry coupled with knowledge. The realised sages declare that the mind has its root in non-enquiry and perishes by an informed enquiry.

D.: Please explain this process.

M.: This consists of *sravana, manana, nididhyasana* and *samadhi,* i.e., hearing, reasoning, meditation and Blissful Peace, as mentioned in the scriptures. Only this can make the mind still.

31-32. There is also an alternative. It is said to be yoga.

D.: What is yoga?

M.: Meditation on Pure Being free from qualities.

D.: Where is this alternative mentioned and how?

M.: In the Srimad Bhagavad Gita, Sri Bhagavan Krishna has said: What is gained by *Sankhya* can also be gained by yoga. Only he who knows that the result of the two processes is the same, can be called a realised sage.

33-34. *D*.: How can the two results be identical?

M.: The final limit is the same for both because both of them end in stillness of mind. This is samadhi or Blissful Peace. The fruit of samadhi is Supreme Knowledge; this remains the same by whichever process gained.

D.: If the fruit is the same for both, the final purpose can be served by only one of them. Why should two processes be mentioned instead of only one?

M.: In the world, seekers of truth are of different grades of development. Out of consideration for them, Sri Bhagavan has mentioned these two in order to offer a choice.

35. *D*.: Who is fit for the path of enquiry *(Sankhya)?*

M.: Only a fully qualified seeker is fit, for he can succeed in it and not others.

36-37. D.: What are the *sadhanas* or requisites for this process?

M.: The knowers say that the *sadhanas* consist of an ability to discern the real from the unreal, no desire for pleasures here or hereafter, cessation of activities (karma) and a keen desire to be liberated. Not qualified with *all these four* qualities, however hard one may try, one cannot succeed in enquiry. Therefore this fourfold *sadhana* is the *sine qua non* for enquiry.

38. To begin with, a knowledge of the distinctive characteristics of these *sadhanas* is necessary. As already pointed out, these distinctive characteristics are of the categories (हेतु, स्वभाव, कार्य, अवधि, फल) cause, nature, effect, limit and fruit. These are now described.

39-44. Discernment *(viveka)* can arise only in a purified mind. Its 'nature' is the conviction gained by the help of sacred teachings that only Brahman is real and all else false. Always to remember this truth is its 'effect'. Its end *(avadhi)* is to be settled unwavering in the truth that only Brahman is and all else is unreal. Desirelessness *(vairagya)* is the result of the outlook that the world is essentially faulty. Its 'nature' is to renounce the world and have no desire for anything in it. Its 'effect' is to turn away in disgust from all enjoyments as from vomit. It ends *(avadhi)* in treatment with contempt of all pleasures, earthly or heavenly, as if they were vomit or burning fire or hell.

Cessation of activities *(uparati)* can be the outcome of the eight fold *yoga (astangayoga),* namely, *yama, niyama, asana, pranayama, pratyahara, dharana, dhyana* and *samadhi, i.e.*, self restraint, discipline, steady posture, control of breath, control of senses, mind collected to truth, meditation and peace. Its 'nature' consists in restraining the mind. Its 'effect' is to cease from worldly activities. It ends *(avadhi)* in forgetfulness of the world as if in sleep, owing to the ending of activities. Desire to be liberated *(mumukshutva)* begins with the association with

realised sages. Its 'nature' is the yearning for liberation. Its 'effect' is to stay with one's master. It ends *(avadhi)* in giving up all study of shastras and performance of religious rites.

When these have reached their limits as mentioned above, the *sadhanas* are said to be perfect.

45-47. Should only one or more of these *sadhanas* be perfect but not all of them, the person will after Death gain celestial regions. If all of them are perfect, they together quickly make the person thoroughly capable of enquiry into the Self. *Only when all the sadhanas are perfect is enquiry possible; otherwise, not.* Even if one of them remains undeveloped, it obstructs enquiry. With this we shall deal presently.

48-49. Dispassion, etc., remaining undeveloped, discernment, though perfect, cannot by itself remove the obstacles, to enquiry into the Self. You see how many are well read in Vedanta *Shastra.* They must all possess this virtue, but they have not cultivated the others, dispassion etc. Therefore they cannot undertake the enquiry into the Self. This fact makes it plain that discernment unattended by dispassion etc., cannot avail.

50-51. *D.*: How is it that even scholars in Vedanta have not succeeded in the pursuit of enquiry?

M.: Though they always study Vedanta and give lessons to others yet in the absence of desirelessness they do not practise what they have learnt.

D.: And what do they do otherwise?

M.: Like a parrot they reproduce the *Vedantic* jargon but do not put the teachings into practice.

D.: What does Vedanta teach?

M.: The Vedanta teaches a man to know that all but the non-dual Brahman is laden with misery, therefore to leave off all desires for enjoyment, to be free from love or hate, thoroughly to cut the knot of the ego appearing as 'I', you,

he, this, that, mine and yours, to rid himself of the notion of 'I' and 'mine', to live unconcerned with the pairs of opposites as heat and cold, pain and pleasure, etc., to remain fixed in the perfect knowledge of the equality of all and making no distinction of any kind, never to be aware of anything but Brahman, and always to be experiencing the Bliss of the non-dual Self.

Though Vedanta is read and well understood, if dispassion is not practised, the desire for pleasures will not fade away. There is no dislike for pleasing things and the desire for them cannot leave the person. Because desire is not checked, love, anger, etc., the ego or the 'false-I' in the obnoxious body, the sense of possession represented by 'I' or 'mine' of things agreeable to the body, the pairs of opposites like pleasure and pain, and false values, will not disappear. However well read one may be, unless the teachings are put into practice, one is not really learned. Only like a parrot the man will be repeating that Brahman alone is real and all else is false.

D.: Why should he be so?

M.: The knowers say that like a dog delighting in offal, this man also delights in external pleasures. Though always busy with Vedanta, reading and teaching it, he is no better than a mean dog.

52. Having read all the shastras and well grounded in them, they grow conceited that they are all knowing, accomplished and worthy of respect; filled with love and hate they presume themselves respectable; they are only packasses esteemed for carrying heavy loads over long distances in difficult and tortuous ways. They need not be considered as regards non-dual Truth. In the same strain Vasishta has spoken much more to Rama.

53. *D.*: Have there been those who being well read in the shastras have not practised their teachings?

M.: Oh, many. We have also read of them in the puranas. Once there was a Brahmin, Brahma Sarma by name. He was well versed in the Vedas and the Vedanta and otherwise an accomplished man too. He would not practise what he had learnt but would give lessons in it to others. Filled with love and hate, transgressing the code of conduct by acting according to greed, and otherwise enjoying himself according to his own sweet will, after death he passed to hell. For the same reason, so many more also went the same way.

In the world we see so many learned pandits consumed by pride and malice. No doubt a study of Vedanta makes one discerning. But if this is not accompanied by dispassion etc., it is useless and does not lead to enquiry.

54-56. *D.*: Will discernment together with dispassion meet the end?

M.: No. In the absence of cessation of activities, these two are not enough for a successful pursuit of enquiry. In its absence there will be no desire to enquire into the Self. How can we speak of success in it?

D.: What will a man with dispassion do if he does not take to enquiry into the Self?

M.: Activities not ceasing, there is no tranquillity; being desireless he dislikes all enjoyments and cannot find pleasure in home, wealth, arts, etc.; so he renounces them, retires into solitary forests and engages in severe but fruitless austerities. The case of King Sikhidhvaja is an example of this.

57-59. *D.*: Then will discernment together with desirelessness and cessation of activities achieve the end?

M.: Not without the desire to be liberated. If this desire is wanting, there will be no incentive to enquire into the Self.

D.: What will the man be doing then?

M.: Being desireless and peaceful, he will not make any effort but remain indifferent.

D.: Have there been men with these three qualities who did not take to enquiry into the Self?

M.: Yes. Dispassion is implied in all austerities; the mind too remains one pointed for *tapasvis;* yet they cannot enquire into the Self.

D.: What do they do then?

M.: Averse to external pursuits, with their minds concentrated, they will always remain austere in animated suspense like that of deep sleep, but not enquire into the Self. As an instance in point, the *Ramayana* says of Sarabhanga rishi that after all his *tapasya* he went to heaven.

D.: Does not heaven form part of the fruits of enquiry?

M.: No. Enquiry must end in Liberation, and this is freedom from repeated births and deaths which does not admit of transit from one region to another. Sarabhanga's case indicates that he could not and did not enquire into the Self. Therefore all the four qualifications are essential for enquiry.

60-61. A simple desire to be liberated unaccompanied by the other three qualities will not be enough. By an intense desire for liberation a man may take to enquiry but if otherwise unqualified, he must fail in his attempt. His case will be like that of a lame man wistfully yearning for honey in a honey comb high up on a tree; he cannot reach it and must remain unhappy. Or, the seeker may approach a master, surrender to him and profit by his guidance.

D.: What authority is there for saying that a man not otherwise qualified but intensely desirous of liberation remains ever unhappy?

62. *M.*: In the *Suta Samhita* it is said that those desirous of enjoyments and yet yearning for liberation are surely bitten by the deadly serpent of samsara and therefore dazed by its poison. This is the authority.

In the view that all the four qualities must be together and in full, there is complete agreement between the *srutis,* reason and experience. Otherwise even if one of them is wanting, enquiry cannot be pursued to success, but after death regions of merit will be gained. When all the four qualities are perfect and together present, enquiry is fruitful.

63-69. *D.*: In conclusion who are fit for enquiry into the Self?

M.: Only those who have all the four requisite qualities in full, are fit, and not others, whether versed in Vedas and shastras or otherwise highly accomplished, nor practisers of severe austerities, nor those strictly observing the religious rites or vows or reciting mantras, nor worshippers of any kind, nor those giving away large gifts, nor wandering pilgrims etc. Just as the Vedic rites are not for the non-regenerate so also enquiry is not for the unqualified.

D.: Can want of requisite qualities disqualify even a very learned scholar?

M.: Be he learned in all the sacred lore or ignorant of all of it, only the four fold requisites can qualify a man for enquiry. The *sruti* says: "The one whose mind is in equipoise, senses controlled, whose activities have ceased and who possesses fortitude" is fit for this. From this it follows that others are not competent but only those who are possessing the four fold virtues.

70. *D.*: Is any distinction made amongst seekers who are competent?

M.: For enquiry into the Self there is absolutely no distinction bearing on caste, stage of life or other similar matters. Be the seeker the foremost scholar, pandit, illiterate man, child, youth, old man, bachelor, householder, *tapasvi, sanyasi, brahmin, kshatriya, vaisya, sudra,* a *chandala* or a woman, only these four qualifications make up the seeker. This is the undisputed view of the vedas and shastras.

71. *D*.: This cannot be. How can illiterate men, women and *chandalas* be qualified to the exclusion of a pandit learned in the shastras? He must certainly be more qualified than others. You say that a knowledge of the shastras is no qualification but practice of their teachings is. No one can practise what he has not known. How can an illiterate person qualify himself in the requisite manner?

M.: In reply I ask you and you tell me — how does the learned man qualify himself?

D.: Because he has known the teachings of the shastras that he should not do karma for selfish ends but dedicate it to God, he will do so; his mind will be purified; gradually he will acquire the dispassion etc., needed for enquiry. Now tell me how an illiterate man can qualify himself.

M.: He also can. Though not learned now, he might have learnt the teachings in preceding births, done actions dedicated to God; his mind being already pure enough, he can now readily acquire the qualities needed for enquiry into the Self.

72. *D*.: In the illiterate man, should the *sadhanas* acquired in preceding births and later lying as latencies, now manifest themselves, why should not his learning acquired in those births similarly manifest itself now?

M.: Some of his past karma may obstruct only the learning from re-manifesting itself.

D.: If the learning is obstructed, how is not the *sadhana* also obstructed from manifestation?

M.: Though the learning is obstructed, the fruits of his valuable labour cannot be lost; he cannot lose his competence for enquiry.

73. *D*.: What would happen if his four fold *sadhanas* were obstructed as well as his learning?

M.: The result would be that for want of the requisite qualities neither the scholar nor the other would be fit for enquiry. Both would be equal.

74-76. *D.*: No. This cannot be. Though not already qualified, the scholar having known the teachings can put them into practice and gradually qualify himself, whereas the other with all his studies had not already succeeded in his preceding births, and what hope can there be now that he has forgotten what he had learnt and his *sadhanas* are obstructed? Obviously he cannot be successful in enquiry.

M.: Not so. Though illiterate a man anxious for liberation will approach a master, learn from him the essence of the scriptures, earnestly practise the teachings and succeed in the end. Just as a worldly man ignorant of scriptures yet desirous of heaven, seeks guidance from a master and by observance, worship and discipline, gains his end, so also by a master's teachings even an illiterate man can certainly benefit as much as the scholar with his knowledge.

77-78. *D.*: Religious rites bear fruits only according to the earnestness of the man. Only if the seeker of Truth is earnest can a master's guidance act in the same manner. Otherwise how can it be?

M.: Just as earnestness is the essential factor for reaping fruits from karma, so it is with the practice of *sadhanas* by the learned scholar or the master's disciple. Karma or *sadhana* cannot succeed if interest is wanting in them. A scholar or an illiterate man reaps the fruits of karma according to the interest he takes in its performance. One who is not earnest need not be considered in any matter concerning the Vedas or a master.

79. A scholar or an illiterate man, if he has not already qualified himself as aforesaid, but is now desirous of liberation, should in right earnest practise the *sadhanas* so that he may qualify himself now at least. He will later be fit for enquiry. So no distinction can be made between a scholar and an illiterate man.

80. *D.*: If so, regarding fitness for enquiry into the Self, how does a scholar differ from an illiterate man?

M.: The difference lies only in the learning and not in the practice of *sadhana* or enquiry.

81-82. *D.*: No. This cannot be. Though learning does not make any difference in *sadhana,* it must certainly weigh in favour of the scholar in the pursuit of enquiry.

M.: Not so. *Shastra* is not the means for enquiry. The means consist of desirelessness etc. Only these can qualify a man for enquiry and a learning of the shastras does not make any difference. Therefore a scholar has no advantage over an illiterate man in the field of enquiry.

83-85. *D.*: Granted that dispassion etc. form the means for success in enquiry, even with the necessary *sadhanas* the enquiry into the Self must be pursued only in the light of the shastras. Therefore the study of the shastras should be indispensable for the successful pursuit of enquiry.

M.: Nonsense! No *Shastra* is required to know the Self. Does any one look into the *Shastra* for the Self? Surely not.

D.: Only if the Self is already known, *Shastra* will not be required for enquiry into the Self. But the seeker being deluded has not known his true nature. How can an illiterate man realise the Self without studying the shastras which deal with the nature of the Self? He cannot. Therefore the shastras must be learnt as a preliminary to realisation.

M.: In that case the knowledge of the Self got from the shastras will be like that of heaven mentioned in the Vedas, i.e., indirect and not directly experienced. This knowledge corresponds to hearsay and cannot be direct perception. Just as the knowledge of the form of Vishnu always remains indirect and there is no direct perception of the four armed being or again the knowledge of heaven can only be indirect in this world, so also the knowledge of the Self contained in the shastras can only be indirect. This leaves the man where he was, just as ignorant as before. Only the knowledge of direct

experience can be true and useful; the Self is to be realised and not to be talked about.

86-88. *D.*: Has any one said so before?

M.: Sri Vidyaranyaswami has said in *Dhyana Deepika:* The Knowledge of the figure of Vishnu gained from shastras that He has four arms, holding a disc, a conch, etc., is only indirect and cannot be direct. The description is intended to serve as a mental picture for worship and no one can see it face to face. Similarly to know from the shastras that the Self is Being-Knowledge-Bliss amounts to indirect knowledge and cannot be the same as experience. For the Self is the inmost being of the individual or the consciousness witnessing the five sheaths; it is Brahman. This not being realised, a superficial knowledge is all that is gained by reading the shastras. It is only indirect knowledge.

D.: Vishnu or heaven being different from the Self can only be objective whereas the Self is subjective and its knowledge, however gained, must be only direct and cannot be indirect.

M.: Although spontaneously and directly the Vedanta teaches the Supreme Truth, "That thou art" meaning that the inmost being of the individual is Brahman, yet enquiry is the only sure means of Self realisation. *Sastric* knowledge is not enough, for it can only be indirect. Only the experience resulting from the enquiry of the Self can be direct knowledge.

89-90. Vasishta also has said to the same effect. *Shastra,* Guru and *upadesa* are all traditional and do not straightway make the seeker directly realise the Self. The purity of the seeker's mind is the sole means for realisation and not *shastra* nor the guru. The self can be realised by one's own acute discernment and by no other means. All shastras agree on this point.

91. From this it is clear that except by enquiry the Self can never be realised, not even by learning Vedanta.

92. *D.*: The Self must be realised only by a critical study of the shastras. Otherwise what can be the enquiry into the Self but a critical and analytical study of the shastras?

93. *M.*: In the body, senses etc., the concept "I" persists. With a one pointed mind turned inwards to look out for this "I" or the Self, which is the inmost Being within the five sheaths, is the enquiry into the Self. To seek elsewhere outside the body by an oral recital of Vedanta *Shastra* or a critical study of its words, cannot be called enquiry into the Self which can only be a thorough investigation into the true nature of the Self by a keen mind.

94-96. *D.*: Can the Self not be known by reading and understanding the shastras?

M.: No. For the Self is Being-Knowledge-Bliss, different from the gross, subtle and causal bodies, witnessing the three states of waking, dream and deep sleep. Always to exercise the vocal organs in reading the shastras, or with a thorough knowledge of grammar, logic and diction to critically examine the scripture and make out its meaning, cannot reveal the Self which is within.

D.: How can it be realised?

M.: By the mind to examine the nature of the five sheaths, by experience to determine them, then to discard each of them step by step "this is not the Self — this is not the Self", and by mind thus grown subtle to look for the Self and realise It as the witnessing Consciousness lying beyond the five sheaths — forms the whole process. The Self cannot be seen without. It is overspread by and lies hidden in the five sheaths. In order to find It, the intellect must be made to turn inwards and search within, not to look for It in the shastras. Will any man in his senses search in a forest for a thing lost in his home? The search must be in the place where the thing lies hidden. In the same way the Self covered over by the five sheaths must be looked for within them and not among the shastras. The shastras are not the place for It.

97. *D.*: True, the Self cannot be found in the shastras. From them a scholar can learn the nature of the five sheaths, intellectually examine, experience and discard them, in order to find and realise the Self. How can the other man ignorant of the nature of the Self or of the five sheaths pursue the enquiry?

M.: Just as the scholar learns from books, so the other learns from the master. Later, enquiry remains the same for both.

98-99. *D.*: Does it follow that a master is necessary for an illiterate man and not for a scholar?

M.: *Scholar or illiterate, no one can succeed without a master.* From the beginning of time, unable to realise the Self without a master, the seekers even learned in all the shastras always sought a master to enlighten them. Narada went to Sanatkumara; Indra to Brahma; Suka to king Janaka. *Unless the master is gracious to him, no man can ever be liberated.*

100-101. *D.*: Has any one illiterate been liberated by Guru's Grace only?

M.: Yes. Yagnavalkya helped his wife Maitreyi to be liberated. Many other women ignorant of the shastras e.g., Leela and Chudala were also liberated while alive. Therefore even those ignorant of the shastras are qualified for enquiry into the Self.

102-108. It must now be obvious that the make up of the best qualified seeker consists in dispassion, resulting from discernment of the real from the unreal, so that he discards all enjoyments here and hereafter as if they were poison or vomit or blazing fire, retires from all activities to remain quiet like a man in deep sleep, but finding himself unable to remain so owing to unbearable pains, physical and mental, as if the hair of his head had caught fire and was burning, he cannot feel happy nor bear the agony even a minute longer and burns in anguish feeling "When shall I be free? How and by what means can I be liberated?"

For the best seeker all the qualifications must be full up to the above said category "limit" *(avadhi).* For the next in scale, the good seeker, the qualifications are developed only to the "effect" stage; for the middling, only to the "nature" stage; and for the lowest, only to their "cause" stage. These stages determine the success of the seeker's efforts.

109. Immediate success attends the efforts of the best qualified; some time elapses before the next in grade succeeds; a longer time is required for the middling; and only a prolonged and steady practice can enable the low-grade seeker to succeed.

110-112. Their perplexity of minds does not allow the last two grades of seekers to take to enquiry. Their minds are more readily composed by yoga, which is more suited to them than enquiry. The first two grades of seekers readily profit by enquiry which is more suited to them than *yoga.*

113-114. In *Dhyana Deepika,* Sri Vidyaranyaswami has said: "The path of enquiry cannot lead to success to the seekers whose minds are confused. To bring down the false notion of their minds, yoga is necessary. The minds of those who are fully qualified, are not confused but remain one pointed; only the veiling power of Ignorance still hides the Self from them; they await only awakening. Enquiry is the process of awakening; therefore it best suits them."

115-118. Yoga can be successful only after a long, steady, earnest, diligent and cautious practice without needless strain.

D.: Why should one be so heedful about it?

M.: When the attempt is made to fix the mind in the Self, it gets restive and drags the man through the senses to the objects. However resolute and learned the man may be, his mind remains wayward, strong, mulish, and hard to restrain. Wanton by nature, it cannot remain steady for a moment; it must run here, there and everywhere; now it dwells in the nether regions and in a trice it flies up in the sky; it moves in all the directions

of the compass; and it is capricious like a monkey. It is hard to fix it. To do so, one must be heedful.

119-121. In the Srimad Bhagavad Gita, Arjuna asked Sri Bhagavan: 'O Krishna! Is not the mind always capricious, disturbing to the man and too strong to be checked? It is easier to hold the air in the fist than to control the mind'.

In the *Yoga Vasishta,* Sri Rama asked Vasishta: 'O master! Is it not impossible to control the mind? One may sooner drink up the oceans or lift up Mt. Meru or swallow flaming fire than control the mind.' From the words of Rama and Arjuna, and our own experience, there can be no doubt that it is exceedingly difficult to control the mind however able and heroic one may be.

122-124. *D.*: Control of mind being so difficult, how can yoga be practised at all?

M.: By dint of practice and dispassion, the mind can be brought under control. The same has been said by Sri Bhagavan to Arjuna and by Vasishta to Sri Rama. Sri Krishna said : "O Son of Kunti! There is no doubt that the mind is wayward and difficult to control. Nevertheless by dint of practice and dispassion it can be controlled." Vasishta said: "O Rama, though the mind is hard to control yet it must be subdued by dispassion and effort even at the cost of wringing your hands, clenching your teeth and holding down the senses and limbs; it must be accomplished by will power."

Therefore intense effort is necessary for the purpose.

125-127. The honey bee of the mind ever living in the lotus of the heart turns away from the sweet honey of unequalled Bliss of the Heart lotus, and desirous of honey bitter with misery, collected outside as sound, touch, form, taste and smell, always flies out through the senses. Though by dispassion the senses are forcibly closed and the mind shut in, yet remaining within, it will be thinking of the present or recollecting the past or building castles in the air.

D.: How can even its subtle activities be checked and itself completely subdued?

M.: Checking its external activities and confining it within, this bee of the mind must be made to be drunk with the honey of the Heart lotus, i.e., the Bliss of the Self.

128. *D.*: Please explain this yoga.

M.: With an intense desire for Liberation, reaching a Guru, hearing from him the non-dual Brahman shining forth as Being-Knowledge-Bliss of the Self, understanding It though indirectly yet as clearly as one understands Vishnu etc., turning the mind one pointedly to this Brahman, without taking to enquiry by reflection *(manana)* always meditating on the non-dual Self of Being-Knowledge-Bliss, attributeless and undifferentiated, is called yoga. By its practice the mind becomes tranquil and can gradually go to samadhi. In samadhi it will experience the Supreme Bliss.

129-130. *D.*: Has any other said so before?

M.: Yes. Sri Bhagavan has said: The *yogi* who, controlling the mind, always turns it upon the Self, becomes perfectly calm, and ultimately gains Me i.e., the Bliss of Liberation. The mind of the *yogi* who always practises yoga, will be steady like a flame protected from the breeze and without movement will pass into samadhi.

131-133. Similarly by enquiry, the mind readily gains peace and samadhi.

D.: What is this enquiry?

M.: After hearing from the Guru about the nature of the Self which in the shastras is spoken of as Brahman or Being-Knowledge-Bliss, to gain a clear indirect knowledge, then according to *upadesa* and by intelligent reasoning to enquire and find out the Self which is Pure Knowledge, and the non-self which is objective and insentient like the ego, to discern and sift them, then directly to experience them as different from

each other, later on by meditation to extinguish all that is objective, *and to absorb into the Self the residual mind left over as non-dual,* ends in the direct experience of Supreme Bliss. Here it has been described in brief, but the shastras deal with it elaborately.

134. This chapter on *Sadhana* has dealt with these two means, Enquiry and Yoga, for making the mind still. According to his merits an intelligent seeker should practise either of them.

135. This Chapter is meant for the earnest student in order that he may study carefully and analyse his qualifications to ascertain what he already has and what more are wanted. After properly equipping himself he can find out which of these two methods suits him and then practise it till success.



CHAPTER IV

SRAVANA

HEARING

1. In the foregoing chapter we had seen that yoga is suited to the lower grade of seekers and enquiry to the higher. In this chapter we shall consider the path of enquiry which effortlessly leads to Knowledge of Brahman.

2-4. *D*.: What is this path of enquiry?

M.: From the shastras it is well known to consist of *sravana, manana, nidhidhyasana* and *samadhi* i.e., hearing the Truth, reflection, meditation and Blissful Peace. The Vedas themselves declare it to be so. "My dear, the Self must be heard from the master, reflected and meditated upon." In another place it is said that in Blissful Peace the Self must be realised. The same idea has been repeated by Sri Sankaracharya in his *Vakyavrtti,* namely that until the meaning of the sacred text "I am Brahman" is realised in all its true significance, one must be practising *sravana* etc.

5-7. In *Chitra Deepika,* Sri Vidyaranyaswami has said that enquiry is the means of knowledge and it consists in hearing the Truth, reflection and meditation; only the state of blissful Peace of awareness in which Brahman alone exists and nothing else, is the true "nature" of Knowledge; the non-revival of the knot of the ego parading as "I" which has been lost once for all, is its "effect"; always to remain fixed as 'I am the Supreme Self' just as strongly, unequivocally and unerringly as the heretofore ignorant identification "I am the body" is its end; liberation is its fruit. From this it follows that only hearing etc. is the enquiry into the Self.

8-10. To hear the Supreme Truth, reflect and meditate on it, and to remain in Samadhi form together the enquiry into the Self. They have for their cause *(Hetu)* the aforesaid four *sadhanas,* namely, discernment, desirelessness, tranquillity and desire to be liberated. Which of these is essential for which part of enquiry will be mentioned in its appropriate place. Here we shall deal with *sravana.*

M.: *Sravana* consists in ascertaining, by means of the six proofs considered together, that the Vedas aim at the non-dual Brahman only.

11-12. To analyse *sravana* under the five categories:- Intense desire to be liberated gives rise to it; always to be hearing of the non-dual Brahman is its nature; the complete removal of that aspect of the veiling power of Ignorance which says, "It (Brahman) does not exist" is its effect; non recurrence of this veiling power is its limit; a firm indirect knowledge is its fruit.

13. *D.*: How can the desire to be liberated be said to be its cause?

M.: In the *sruti* it is said: "In the state of dissolution before creation there was only the non-dual Reality." This Reality is the same as the Self. Only he who is eager to be liberated will seek the knowledge of the Self and take to hearing it. No other is interested in It. Therefore eagerness to be liberated is the essential requisite for this part of enquiry, viz. *sravana.*

14. *D.*: Just now you said that always to be hearing of the non-dual Self is the nature of *sravana.* Who is this non-dual Self?

M.: He is famous in the *srutis* as the Consciousness beyond the gross, subtle and causal bodies, apart from the five sheaths and witness of the waking, dream and sleep states.

15-17. *D.*: What can be beyond the gross, subtle and causal bodies?

M.: Of these the gross body is composed of skin, blood, muscles, fat, bones, nerve stuff and lymph; it is secreting and excreting; it is born and it dies; like a wall it is insentient; like a pot it is an object of the senses.

The subtle body is the internal organ *(antahkarana)* well-known as the mind, which functions as the 'I' mode and 'this' mode; together with the five vital airs, the five senses and the five organs and limbs, it transmigrates to other bodies or worlds; always remaining within a gross body it experiences pleasures and pains.

The beginningless, neither real nor unreal, and indescribable Ignorance manifests these subtle and gross bodies and is therefore said to be the causal body.

18. These three bodies are contrary to the nature of the Self.

D.: How?

M.: The gross body is insentient; the subtle is pain ridden; the causal is unreal. These are the opposites of the Being-Knowledge-Bliss nature of the Self. Therefore the Self must be different from these.

19-25. *D*.: How is it so from the five sheaths also?

M.: The five sheaths are the material, the vital, the mental, the intellectual and the blissful ones. Of these the material sheath is born of food and grows with food; it is thus food modified. Therefore it is material. Like a sheath to a sword, the body covers the Self and obstructs its knowledge. Therefore it is the material sheath. Moreover it has a beginning and an end. Therefore it is not the Self who is eternal.

Together the vital, the mental and the intellectual sheaths form the subtle body. Through the five passages in the body functioning in five different ways according to its modes, the vital air together with the five organs and limbs obstructs the Self from being known; therefore this is the vital sheath. Being insentient it cannot be the Self.

Joined with desire, anger etc., thinking this and that, the "this" mode of mind manifests the latencies. Together with the five senses this "this" mode forms the mental sheath. Being insentient, it cannot be the Self.

Definitely to make out the "this" and "that" ideas of the mind to be a pot, a cloth etc., to have the false notion of 'I' in the body etc., and that of "mind", in home, wealth, lands etc., is the nature of the 'I' mode. United with the five senses, this I-mode forms the intellectual sheath. Arising in the waking and dream states, joined with the body, permeating it from head to foot, it is resolved in swoons or in the deep sleep state; therefore it cannot be the eternal Self.

After waking from deep sleep every one feels, "I did not know anything — I slept happily." Here ignorance and bliss are the experiences. This blissful ignorance is the blissful sheath. Being ignorant, it must be insentient and non self.

So far all the five sheaths have been shown to be non self. The experiencer in them must be different from them like the seer of a pot remaining different from it. There can be no doubt on this point.

26. *D.*: How is the Self said to be witnessing the three states?

M.: The three states are the waking, dream and deep sleep through which the *Jiva* or the 'false-I' or the ego passes, identifying itself with the gross, subtle and causal bodies respectively. The Self must therefore be the Consciousness witnessing these three states; "It" is not identical with any or all of them.

27. *D.*: If these three states are not of the Self, of whom else can they be?

M.: They can be only of the ego which assumes them whereas the Self is unconcerned. Affecting the waking state, the ego in the guise of *visva* enjoys the gross sense experiences;

similarly in dream as *taijasa* he enjoys the subtle experiences; and in deep sleep as *prajna* he experiences ignorance. Therefore the ego must be the experiencer in these states and not the witnessing Self.

28-29. *D.*: What makes you say that the ego and not the Self is the experiencer of the three states?

M.: In deep sleep, the ego becoming dormant, no experience or experiencer is seen; only on the rise of the ego are they found. He must therefore be the experiencer. His are the two states of waking and dream; they cannot be those of the Self.

D.: Whose is deep sleep then?

M.: It is also of the ego, because just as it arrogates to itself the waking and dream states saying "I woke up — I dreamt", so it does the deep sleep state also saying "I slept". It cannot be of the Self since It remains unconcerned as the witness of the three states and of their experiencer who remains conceited with the ideas "I woke up — I dreamt — I slept." Therefore none of the three states is of the Self.

30-31. *D.*: The ego cannot be the experiencer in deep sleep also. It is not there and how can it be said to be the experiencer? In the waking and dream states, the ego is rightly said to be the experiencer; in deep sleep the Self must be the experiencer.

M.: You are not right. The *Jiva* i.e., the ego, who in the waking and dream states appears as the intellectual sheath to enjoy gross and subtle things, sinks in deep sleep to remain dormant as the blissful sheath, experiencing ignorance and bliss as "I did not know anything — I slept happily." Had the ego not been present in deep sleep, on waking there could not be the recollection "I did not know anything — I slept happily." Only the experiencer can recollect his experiences and not another. Even the recollection can only be of what was actually experienced and not of what was not. On waking, it is the ego

which says "I did not know anything — I slept happily". From this it is clear that the experiencer in the deep sleep was the ego and not the Self.

32-33. *D.*: But for the blissful sheath of deep sleep, what can the witnessing Consciousness be?

M.: As the blissful sheath, it is ignorant; this ignorance is recognised later. The recogniser must be different from recognition and he must be the experiencer of the blissful sheath.

Now that he has fancied himself as the blissful sheath which is none other than ignorance, he remains ignorant himself because ignorance cannot know itself. Therefore it follows there must be the witness of this ignorance who simply illuminates the blissful sheath which appears as the idea "I do not know anything", and remains apart from it. This witness is the Self.

D.: What evidence is there to prove that in deep sleep all is reduced to dormancy leaving the witness unaffected?

M.: The *sruti* says "The vision of the Witness can never be lost" meaning that when all else remains dormant and unknown, the Seer remains aware as ever.

34-35. *D.*: Well, in deep sleep which is itself ignorance, a cogniser is rightly inferred; but in the waking and dream states the intellectual sheath can be the cogniser and there is no place for a witness apart.

M.: You cannot think so. Just as in deep sleep the Self is the cogniser of the ignorance, so also in the other states it is the witness of the intellect knowing all waking and dream notions such as I dreamt — I woke up — I went — I came — I saw — I heard — I know — which clearly indicate a knower. Just as the witness is admitted to be aware of ignorance, so also it must be of knowledge as well. Moreover being a knower at one time, and not knower at another time, the intellectual sheath cannot be the witness.

D.: If so, let the Self, the witness of the intellect be also the experiencer.

M.: No, no! The witness of deep sleep and of its experiencer, cannot be the experiencer of the waking and dream states.

D.: If the Self be the witness of deep sleep and of its experiencer, can It not be the experiencer of the waking and dream states?

M.: No, he who sleeps must wake up or dream dreams. Never sleeping, ever aware as the witness of the three states and of their experiencer who thinks "I slept — I dreamt — I woke up", the Self cannot have the three states nor be their experiencer. This cannot admit of any doubts.

36. *D.*: Why should not the Self be both witness and experiencer of the three states?

M.: Just as the witness watching two men fighting with each other does not fight himself, so also the witness cannot be the experiencer. Again as the fighter does not simply watch the fight but himself fights, so also the experiencer cannot be the witness. Therefore the same Self cannot be both the experiencer and the witness.

D.: Now what is the conclusion?

M.: The 'false-I' is the experiencer and the other one who is unconcernedly watching the states and their experiencer is the witness.

37. *D.*: In that case, for the three states are there three different witnesses or is there only one?

M.: The witness is only one whereas the states alternate one with another; the witness does not change. The same continuous awareness runs through the appearance, staying and disappearance of the three states. Thus the witness of the three states is the Self. The witness-hood of the Self has thus been described.

38. In this manner the *tatastha lakshana* of the Self has been described. Now we shall consider Its *swarupa lakshana.* It

is Being-Knowledge-Bliss, single, all permeating, untainted, perfect, unchanged and non-dual.

39-41. *D.*: What is meant by Its 'Being'?

M.: Always It remains witnessing the appearance and disappearance of all the states superimposed on It. Nay more — It was the Witness not only of the waking, dream and deep sleep states but also of the births, growths (childhood, youth, old age) and deaths of previous bodies (just as It is of this body and will be of future bodies). It is thus the one, continuous, ever existent witness of all these. Its "Being" is thus obvious.

42. *D.*: What is meant by Its being 'Knowledge'?

M.: Inasmuch as It always remains illumining and manifesting the three states and their relative 'false-I', Knowledge is self evident.

43-46. *D.*: What is meant by Its being 'Bliss'?

M.: Always being the one object of supreme joy, rather supreme joy itself, the Self is Bliss.

D.: Is not the non-self also pleasing?

M.: No.

D.: Why not?

M.: Not by itself but only as an object of enjoyment for the individual self, the non-self is dear as husband, wife, child, wealth, home, pleasing unguents, sweet scents etc.

D.: Why are they said to be not pleasing by themselves?

M.: Should they be so, they must always remain so. At one time, one thing is pleasing and at other times, the same thing is nauseating.

D.: How?

M.: Take a woman, for instance. When the man is lustful, she is fancied to be pleasing; when he suffers from fever, she is not wanted; for a man grown desireless, she is of no interest at all. According to circumstances the same woman can be pleasing,

unwanted, or of no interest. The same applies to all other objects of enjoyment. Thus the non-self cannot be pleasing.

47. *D.*: Is the Self always pleasing?

M.: Certainly; never do you know It to be otherwise.

48-49. *D.*: In cases of unbearable pain, the Self is given up in disgust. How can it be said to be always pleasing?

M.: The Self can never be given up because he who in disgust relinquishes the sufferings that are alien to him, does not give up himself.

D.: It is the Self that is given up by himself.

M.: In that case, if the Self is given up, there must be another who gives it up. On the other hand, he being the one who gives up, gives up the painful body which is different from himself, and not himself. Furthermore the very fact of occasional disgust with the body etc., proves that the non-self is painful and the Self joyful.

D.: How does it prove this?

M.: Should the Self be painful, pain could never be disliked. Because one's true nature is joy, one dislikes pain in the shape of body etc. Not being natural but only adventitious, ailments are not liked. Had they been natural, they could not be disliked. Just as the dislike of illness etc., shows that they are not natural but only adventitious, so also the dislike of the body etc., shows that these are similarly not natural and that joy is one's own eternal true nature. Therefore a sudden and intense disgust with the body etc., makes a man rid himself of them but not of the Self. This very fact teaches that the body etc. are not the Self. It must now be obvious how the Self can never be the object of dislike to any one.

50-51. *D.*: Even if the Self cannot be detested, can It not be an object of indifference?

M.: No. Being oneself the one who is indifferent, one can be indifferent to the non-self e.g. a pebble or a blade of grass but

not to oneself. Therefore the Self is not an object of occasional dislike like the body, woman etc. nor of indifference like a blade of grass or a pebble. Always It is Joy Itself.

52-53. *D.*: If the Self is always pleasing and so are sense-objects at the time of enjoyment, let them also be regarded as pleasing.

M.: The delight in any object is not lasting but what is now delightful soon yields its place to another more so. There are degrees of pleasure and succession of the objects liked. The pleasure in objects is only wanton and not steady. This is possible only if the pleasure is born of one's own delusion and not of the intrinsic value of the object. For example, see how a dog chews a dry, marrowless bone until blood comes out of the wounds in its mouth, fancies the taste of its own blood to be that of the marrow of the bone and will not part with it. Should it find another similar bone, it drops down the one in its mouth and takes the other. In the same way, superimposing his own joyful nature on the detestable objects of fancy, the man delights in them by mistake, for joy is not their nature. Owing to the ignorance of man the objects which are really painful by nature seem to be pleasing. This seeming pleasure does not remain steady in one object but often shifts to other objects; it is wanton, graded, and not absolute, whereas the Joy of the Self is not captious. Even when the body etc., are cast off, this joy endures in the Self for ever; it is also absolute. Therefore the Self is Supreme Bliss. So far the Being-Knowledge-Bliss nature of the Self has been established.

54. *D.*: Do these three — Being, Knowledge and Bliss form the qualities or the nature of the Self?

M.: These are not qualities but the very Self. Just as heat, light, and redness form the nature of fire and are not its qualities, so also Being, Knowledge and Bliss are the nature of the Self.

55. *D.*: If the Self has three forms as Being, Knowledge and Bliss, are there then three selves?

M.: No. It is only one. Just as the fire showing forth as heat, light and redness, is not three but only one, or water appearing as coldness, fluidity and taste is only one, so also the Self shining forth as Being-Knowledge-Bliss is not three but only one.

56-58. *D.*: If the Self is only one, how can It be said to be 'all permeating'?

M.: It is correct to say that the Self, being only One, is all permeating, because It is all knowing, It, as Knowledge, can permeate all.

D.: Being the inmost Self aware of the five sheaths of the body, can It be all knowing?

M.: Yes. It can. The whole universe made up of the five elements, their combinations and mutations is seen by Itself and by no other. Being insentient, the others cannot know. Otherwise the insentient like a pot etc., should be knowing. But it is not so. Only It knows all of them but they do not know It. It is the All knower.

D.: The Self perceives only such things as are within the ken of the senses and not those beyond. Where does It perceive Mt. Meru or Heaven?

M.: It knows all. In the Self which is but the Ether of Knowledge, all that is non-self i.e., insentient, appears in both manners, as perceived or unperceived. Just as in the Ether of Knowledge and not elsewhere, the home, lands, village, town and country seem perceived by the senses, so also things beyond the senses such as Mt. Meru or heaven appear as unperceived by them.

D.: Can anything unperceived by the senses appear at all?

M.: Yes, it can. Though non-existent like the son of a barren woman, yet in the Ether of Knowledge, the home etc., appear as objects of perception, because the latencies of the mind present themselves so. In the same manner, though unreal and unperceived, Meru etc., are fancied by the mind and appear in the Ether of Knowledge.

D.: How?

M.: Before the witnessing consciousness in dreams the mental phenomena present themselves as objects of perception such as the home etc., and also others beyond perception like heaven etc. In the same way they do so in the waking state too. Otherwise one cannot say “I do not know heaven, Meru etc.” However one says “I do not know heaven, Meru etc.” This means that heaven, Meru etc., appear as objects unperceived by the senses. Thus the Self which knows all the insentient non-self, like Mt. Meru etc., is this Self only.

If not found in all (everywhere) but seen only within, as the inner Self witnessing the five sheaths, how can It know all? Certainly It cannot do so. In itself the mind fancies things far and near, perceptible and imperceptible, known and unknown. As their substratum the Self runs through and knows them all. The Self is thus all-pervading. Therefore the same Self only is in all and there can be no doubt of this.

59. *D*.: Should the Self be all-pervading, It must be associated with all and therefore tainted.

M.: No. Like the all-permeating ether, It is impartite and therefore unassociated. Not only untainted like the ether, but also surpassing it, the Self remains as the Ether of Consciousness. Therefore the *srutis* say “This *Purusha* is certainly untainted.”

60. *D*.: Being unassociated and thus untainted, beyond all, separate and indifferent, the Self must be imperfect.

M.: No. There exists nothing different nor similar to It; there are no parts in It. It remains undifferentiated externally and internally. It is Perfection. Though all-filling yet It remains unassociated like the ether.

D.: How can It be all-permeating and yet impartite?

M.: Not here nor there, but all-pervading, It is undivided in space. Not now, nor then, but ever-present, It is undivided in time. There is nothing beside the Self, It is the All-Self or the very being of everything; therefore It is undivided by anything.

It remains thus undivided by any or all these three, all-filling and perfect. Thus Its Perfection is proved.

61. *D.*: Because, all-pervading like the ether, the Self fills all, It must be changeful.

M.: No. Being the witness of all created elements, ether etc., that undergo changes, such as existence, birth, growth, transformation, decay and death, the Self cannot Itself be changeful. Otherwise like the other things It would be changing; then It must be born, grow and die away. Thus It must fall into the category of insentient things. If insentient, It cannot at all be aware. On the contrary, It is known always to remain as the witness of the birth, growth and decay of all the universe. It is also impartite. Therefore It must be free from changes.

62-63. *D.*: To say that the Self is free from changes implies the existence of non-self which is changing. Then the Self cannot be 'non-dual' and duality must result.

M.: No. There exists nothing besides the Self. It is 'non-dual'. If the non-self is not different from the Self, there cannot be duality.

D.: How can the non-self be the Self and not separate from the Self?

M.: The Self is the origin of all. The effect cannot be different from its cause. We do not see them totally different from each other. Being the cause of all, the Self is identical with all. There can be nothing different from It.

64-66. *D.*: How can the Self be the origin of all?

M.: Being the seer of all, It is the origin of all.

D.: How can the seer be the origin?

M.: In all cases of illusion, only the seer is found to be the cause of all of them. When nacre is seen to be silver, the material cause is no other than the seer; the same is the case with all dream-visions for they have their origin in the dreamer only.

Similarly with the illusion of the world of the waking state, the seer must be the cause.

D.: Should the universe be a myth, your conclusion will follow. Is this universe only a myth?

M.: First there is the authority of the *srutis* which say that in dissolution there remains only the non-dual Self and in creation the names and forms are by Maya superimposed on It like the name and form of a snake on a dimly visible rope.

Secondly, reasoning shows the illusory nature of this universe because it is seen to appear and disappear like the unreal visions in dreams.

Thirdly, the sages have proclaimed their realisation that all this is but illusory and that only Brahman is real.

Therefore all this universe is really false. Now it is but right to say that being the witness, the Self is the sole cause of all this universe which is but an illusory appearance on the Self. The illusory effect cannot be separate from the basis. Just as the foam, bubbles and waves are not different from their origin, the sea, so also the phenomena of the Universe are but the Self falsely presented. Therefore the Self is 'non-dual' and there can be no duality.

67. In the presence of the master always attentively to study the Vedanta shastra which treats of the non-dual Being and retain its meaning forms the "nature" of *sravana* or hearing. This must always be attended to.

68. *D.*: What is the "effect" of this *sravana*?

M.: It destroys that veiling part of ignorance which hitherto made one think "Where is this non-dual Self? Nowhere". To destroy this ignorant conclusion of the non-existence of the non-dual Self is its "effect".

69-70. *D.*: How long should one continue *sravana*?

M.: Until the doubt of the non-existence of the non-dual Being does not rear its head again. The non-recurrence of this doubt is said to be the "limit" of the process of *sravana*.

D.: Can the doubt once set at rest, recur?

M.: Yes, it can.

D.: How?

M.: In many passages in the *srutis*, duality is dealt with and can easily be mistaken to be proved. For instance, one studies the shastras dealing with Vishnu and becomes devoted to Him; later on, finding other gods similarly dealt with, one's devotion to Vishnu is likely to suffer. In the same manner, a study of the *Advaita* shastras removes the doubt regarding non-dual Being, yet the *dvaita* shastras may lead to a different conclusion and the student may lose faith in the non-duality of Being. Therefore one must continue *sravana* till the different texts do not shake one's reasoned faith in non-dual Being.

D.: What is the "fruit" of *sravana*?

M.: When once for all the non-belief in the non-duality of Being is destroyed, no sacred text or tricky argument can make the seeker deviate from his faith. All obstructions to his faith thus removed, he remains steady in his indirect knowledge of non-dual Being. This is the "fruit" of *sravana*.

71. *D*.: What is this indirect knowledge?

M.: To know the true nature of the inmost Self, not by direct experience but by a study of the shastras, is called indirect Knowledge. Although one does not see Vishnu face to face yet through the evidence of the shastras one believes in His existence; this forms only common (*samanya*) knowledge. Similarly a common knowledge of non-duality of Brahman gained through the *advaita* shastras is indirect knowledge.

72-76. *D*.: Why should the knowledge arising from *sravana* be said to be indirect? Can it not be direct?

M.: No. So long as the Inner Self cannot shine forth owing to the other veiling aspect of Ignorance (*abhanavarana*) mere knowledge of Its existence cannot be called direct.

D.: Is this confirmed by others also?

M.: Yes. Sri Vidyaranyaswamy says in *Dhyana Deepika*: "Though by *sravana*, Brahman can be understood to be Being-Knowledge-Bliss, yet It cannot thus be directly experienced as the sole-Being witnessing the five sheaths. Although from the shastras, Vishnu is understood to be four-armed, holding a disc, a conch and a mace in His hands, and even a mental picture of Him can manifest in one-pointed meditation, yet He is not seen directly with these eyes; therefore the knowledge of Him remains only indirect." The knowledge gained from the shastras is thus only indirect and not directly experienced. Similarly the knowledge gained by *sravana* can remain only indirect and is not directly experienced.

D.: Here Vishnu is not the Self but is different. It is but right that knowledge of Him gained from the shastras remains indirect. But Brahman is not different from the Self. To the seeker who is ignorant of this identity, the *srutis* reveal the fact saying, "That thou art". On learning its true significance he should be said to have directly realised the Truth. This knowledge cannot remain indirect like that of heaven etc. *Sravana* must therefore end in directly experienced knowledge.

M.: Not so. It is true that the sacred text reveals the Truth, "That thou art". Still direct knowledge does not result merely by hearing it. In the absence of enquiry into the Self, knowledge cannot become direct. In order to have this indirect knowledge directly experienced, it is necessary to reflect on it.

77. Here ends the chapter on *sravana*. The student who reads this carefully will gain indirect knowledge. In order to experience directly, he will seek to know the nature of *manana* or reflection.

CHAPTER V

MANANA

REFLECTION

1. *D.*: Master, on hearing it from you, the nature of the Self is now clear to me, but the knowledge remains only indirect. Kindly instruct me in reflection, by practising which the darkness of Ignorance now hiding the Self may vanish and direct experience result.

2. *M.*: Always to direct the thought with subtle reasoning upon the non-dual Self that is now known indirectly, is called reflection.

3-4. *D.*: Please tell me its 'cause', 'nature', 'effect', 'limit' and 'fruit'.

M.: Discernment of the real from the unreal is its 'cause'; enquiry into the Truth of the non-dual Self is its 'nature'; to tear off that veiling aspect of Ignorance which makes one say "It does not shine forth" is its 'effect'; the non recrudescence of this veiling is its 'limit'; and direct experience is its 'fruit'. So say the sages.

5. *D.*: Why is discernment said to be its 'cause'?

M.: Only he who, by discernment of the real from the unreal has acquired indirect knowledge, is fit to seek by enquiry the direct knowledge of experience. No other can succeed in the search for it.

6. *D.*: Why should not the Desire for Liberation be the 'cause' of reflection?

M.: A mere desire to be Liberated cannot make a man fit for enquiry into the Self. Without *sravana* one cannot have even an indirect knowledge. How can one succeed in one's enquiry?

Only after knowing the nature of the Self, should one proceed to seek It. Ignorant of Its true nature, how can one investigate the Self? Simple desire to be liberated will not suffice.

7. *D.*: Should not this desire lead to enquiry? With the rise of this desire the man will begin to hear about the nature of the Self and gain indirect knowledge which must enable him to undertake the enquiry.

M.: This amounts to saying that the seeker possesses discernment. He is not only desirous of Liberation but also discerning in intellect. With *sravana* comes this faculty of intellectual discernment of the real from the unreal, or the Self from the non-self. This is called indirect knowledge. The shastras say that only he who possesses indirect knowledge can discern the real or the Self from the unreal or the non-self, and is fit for enquiry into the Self. Therefore discernment is the *sine qua non* for enquiry.

8-12. *D.*: Even if the desire for Liberation be not the particular (*visesha*) cause of Reflection, could not either desirelessness or tranquillity be the cause of it?

M.: All these are only general aids for reflection but not its particular causes. A desireless and tranquil man need not necessarily have the indirect knowledge of the Self and is therefore unfit for enquiry into the Self. There are men of austerities who are desireless and tranquil but not anxious for Liberation. Having no desire for Liberation they have not heard at all about the Self.

D.: How can they be said not to be desirous of Liberation?

M.: Inasmuch as they engage in austerities without taking to *sravana* etc., which is the only gateway to Liberation, the absence of desire for Liberation is inferred.

D.: No. They too can be desirous of being Liberated.

M.: If so, they must give up their austerities, always remain with a master and engage themselves in hearing of the Self. If it

be said that they have already done *sravana* also, then since they have gained indirect knowledge, they should be engaged in reflection. Not having done *sravana*, though endowed with desirelessness and tranquillity, they are incapable of discerning the real from the unreal and therefore unfit for enquiry into the Self. Desirelessness etc. can only be aids to this enquiry but not its chief causes. Discernment of the real from the unreal is the only chief cause.

13-14. *D.*: Can the Self not be realised by austerities accompanied by desirelessness and tranquillity, without enquiry?

M.: No. By non-enquiry the Self has been lost sight of; to regain It enquiry is needed. In its absence how can even crores of austerities restore the sight? Always to enquire into the Self is the only remedy for the blindness of the ignorant whose mental eye has been bedimmed by the darkness of non-enquiry spreading its veil. Unless by the eye of knowledge gained through enquiry, the Self cannot be realised.

15-16. *D.*: What is this enquiry into the Self?

M.: With one-pointed intellect to seek within the five sheaths the Self which is shining forth as "I" in the body, senses etc., considering "who is this Self?, where is It? and how is It?", is the nature of the enquiry into the Self. With subtle intellect the enquiry into the Reality, namely the Self within the unreal sheaths must always be pursued.

17. *D.*: Earlier it was said that the Self is all-permeating. How can the all-permeating Self be looked for only in the sheaths? Moreover the sheaths are said to be unreal. How can an enquiry into unreal things lead to the recognition of Reality?

18-19. *M.*: Truly the Self is all-permeating. Still Its knowledge is obscured by the covering of the five sheaths. The Self which lies hidden in them must be looked for only there and not elsewhere. A thing is sought in the place where it was lost. Something lost at home is not looked for in a forest. In

the same manner the Self hidden in five sheaths and remaining unrecognised by wrong identification with them must be found only by sifting the unwanted elements, here the five sheaths.

D.: How can an investigation into unreal things lead to the recognition of the Reality?

M.: The unreal coverings must be removed to disclose the Reality hidden in them. They are superimposed on the Real Self. They must be examined and ascertained to be unreal so that their substratum which is the sole Reality can be known. Unless the external trappings that are superimposed are looked into, their substratum, that is the Reality, cannot be found. Has any one in the world been able to find the rope without looking and enquiring into the nature of the seeming snake, though this is superimposed on it and unreal? Or can there be any one, who having enquired into the superimposed snake, did not discover its substratum to be the rope? No one. In the same manner an indirect knowledge should be gained by *sravana* that the five sheaths are superimposed and unreal; but by a keen intellect the seeker must probe deep into this superficial knowledge and experience the truth of it; just as the directly experienced gross body is clearly known to be built up by food and recognised to be only the food-sheath covering the Self, so also the other four subtler sheaths remaining unknown to the common people but taught by the scriptures and the master must be known by their characteristics; they must be enquired into and directly experienced; at the same time they must be recognised to be only sheaths and successively dismissed in order to seek their witness, Consciousness-Being or the subtle Self.

20. *D.*: If the Self is enquired into, after investigation and dismissing these sheaths, how can It be realised?

M.: This enquiry is but reflecting on the Self i.e., *manana*, its effect is to destroy the veil of Ignorance. A constant reflection on the Self lying behind the sheaths must burn away that aspect of veiling which makes one say ‘It does not shine forth’.

D.: How can this be?

M.: Just as an enquiry into the rope-snake that obstructs the rope from view, destroys the ignorance of the rope, so also a keen quest of the Self that remains as the witness of the five sheaths, destroys the ignorance which supposes that the Self is not seen and that It does not shine forth. On the clouds being scattered away as the sun shines forth in its full glory, so also the darkness of veiling being destroyed the witnessing Self will shine forth in all Its splendour. Therefore enquiry is necessary.

21. *D.*: How long should one continue to enquire into the Self?

M.: Non-recrudescence of the darkness of Ignorance is said to be the "limit" of reflection. Therefore one should continue the practice until this darkness of Ignorance does not recur.

22-24. *D.*: Can the veiling once removed, return again?

M.: Yes. So long as doubts arise, this Ignorance must be inferred to exist.

D.: How can there be any doubt left after the Self has been realised?

M.: On enquiring into the sheaths and dismissing them as unreal, the Self, their witnessing consciousness is realised to be unique, finer than ether, even like void. Now that the sheaths have been dismissed as unreal and there is nothing but the void-like subtle Self, a fear may arise that one is left as nothing or void.

D.: How can it be?

M.: Transcending all, the Self has nothing in common with worldly things or activities; It transcends the void also; hence the experience is unique and unearthly. A fear may then arise "Can this be the Self? It cannot be — Should this be the Self, how can I be such a void?" Even after realising the impartite Self, there is no confidence in one's own experience; it is regarded as impossible and a great doubt arises. The sense of impossibility gives rise to doubt. But repeated reflection removes

this sense of impossibility. So it is said by Vyasa in the *Brahma Sutras*: आवृत्ति असकृदुपदेशात्. On account of the repeated instruction (by the scriptures), (it is) necessary repeatedly (to hear of, reflect and meditate on the Self).

25. *D*.: What is the "fruit" of such reflection?

M.: By continued practice, the veiling is destroyed; with its destruction, the sense of impossibility of the Self shining forth all alone disappears; with its disappearance all obstacles are at an end and then direct experience results as clearly and surely as an apple in the palm of your hand. This is the "fruit".

26. *D*.: What is this direct experience?

M.: Just as one can clearly distinguish the sun from the cloud hiding it, so also when one can distinguish the Self from the ego, it is direct experience. This is the 'fruit' of reflection.

27. My son! wise boy! Reflection has now been taught in detail. It is for you to enquire into the five sheaths, dismiss them as unreal, then with keen intellect turn inwards to find the very subtle Self and recognise it distinctively.

28. *D*.: O Master! even on a keen enquiry I am unable to say "These are the five sheaths; this is the inmost Self as distinguished from them". I cannot directly realise the Self. Why is it so?

M.: This is owing to beginningless Ignorance.

D.: How did this Ignorance arise?

M.: From the aforesaid veiling.

D.: How?

M.: Although by nature the Self and the ego are quite different from each other, the aforesaid veiling presents them as if they were identical.

D.: Please explain this.

M.: See, how though rope and a snake are quite different from each other, yet ignorance of the rope makes it appear a snake, so also the Self being hidden by the darkness of veiling

does not shine forth and in its place only the functions of the ego, doership etc., are seen.

29-31. Therefore enquire into the nature of the five sheaths, find them, realise them, and then reject them as non-self. There must be the unchanging witness of changes, originating and destroying these phenomena. Find and realise Him as the Self.

D.: Distinct from all the phenomena, where can the witness be?

M.: There is the triad composed of the knower, knowledge, and the known. Of these, the knower is the subject; knowledge is the intellect; and the known the objects. This triad arises and flourishes in the waking and dream states and merges in the insentience of the deep sleep state. That which, remaining as the sole unchanging consciousness, illuminates and causes the appearance of all these three states, is the witnessing Self. Discern it and realise it.

32. *D.*: When according to your instructions, I enquire into the five sheaths and reject them as being non-self, I do not find anything left but simple void. Where then is the Self?

33-35. *M.*: To say that there is nothing left behind the five sheaths, is like saying "I have no tongue to speak".

D.: How so?

M.: Unless one has a tongue one cannot say that one has no tongue to speak with. Similarly unless there is the seer of the void one cannot say there was nothing left. Otherwise one can not say anything. On the contrary since the speaker says that nothing is seen, it is obvious that the Self remains there revealing nothing besides Itself.

D.: If so, how can It remain unknown?

M.: The Self sees all but is seen by none else. Being Self-shining It can without any aids know things but there is nothing which can know It. It knows all; It knows that there is nothing; It is the inmost core of all; It remains as the

pure, untainted, Ether of Consciousness unseen by anything. It remains undivided. The knower of all, the Pure Knowledge, is the Self.

36-43. *D.*: How does the Self remain unknown by anything, yet knowing all?

M.: The sheaths appear as existing. When they are rejected, their absence appears as a blank or nothing. The sheaths, the blank and all else that appears are but insentient and cannot of their own accord show themselves forth but must be seen by a seer. In the absence of the seer, nothing can be seen.

D.: How so?

M.: Objects like a pot etc., manifest only to a seer; otherwise they do not exist. In the same manner, the void beyond the five sheaths manifests because there is the seer. Unless there is the witness, how can the void appear as though nothing were seen? Not being conscious but only insentient, it cannot show itself forth unless the witness sees and recognises it.

D.: Though insentient it can manifest itself.

M.: In that case let objects like a pot etc., show themselves forth, in the absence of their seer. This is impossible. The void appearing as nothing is also insentient and therefore cannot shine forth by itself. It must be illumined by a light beyond and witnessed by it.

D.: How?

M.: Just as clouds etc. above or objects like a pot etc. below, are not self-luminous but must be illumined by the sun which lies millions of miles beyond and is self-effulgent, so also the void etc. beyond the intellect and objects fancied by it, are insentient and non-luminous but must be illumined by the transcendent, self-shining Consciousness. Beyond the void and distinct from it, there is the witness seeing the void and all else. He is the Self unknown by anything, yet knowing all. By your intellect made subtle, find and realise the Self.

44-45. On the nature of the Self being thus made clear by the Master's words, like an apple in one's hand, the disciple was able directly to realise the Self. He then expressed his joy thus: "O Master, I have directly experienced the Self! I have now known It well!"

M.: How do you find the Self to be?

D.: Witness of all objects, void etc., knowledge, aware of all, very majestic, inestimable, unfathomable, beyond the senses, mind, intellect etc., unassociated, untainted, formless, not gross, not subtle, not atomic, not massive, not white nor black nor otherwise coloured, not dark nor bright but finer and purer than ether, is the Self. Not the least trace of any change is to be found there. Owing to the light of Consciousness, all changing objects and the void appear outside intellect and far from it; the Self has no modification.

M.: How then do the notions "I am fat — I am lean" appear in the Self?

D.: The veiling factor of Ignorance hides the true nature of the Self from all; without seeing the Self, all mistake the sheaths for the Self. This is owing to Ignorance only. In fact there is no modification in the Self. Though pure and colourless, the sky seems blue; similarly Ignorance makes the Self look as if changing whereas It remains only unchanging and untainted.

Here and now It is clearly known; It can never be absent. O, is it not a wonder that though ever so immediate and real, there should have been this great illusion that the Self is not seen! It is like the owl seeing nothing but darkness round it in the dazzling light of the Sun! O! the Self is effulgent and manifest! Yet an illusion spread a darkness over us to make us feel "The Self is not seen!" Really it is a wonder! Can there be darkness in midday? Before the ever-bright, ever-manifest Supreme Self, can there remain any veiling? Whence can it

arise? How can one even think of It? Surely veiling is itself an illusion; it is a mere word; there is no sense in it!

M.: If there is no veiling how did the Self lie hidden so long?

D.: Though unreal, this Ignorance flourished on the non-enquiry of the individual. Just as one's non-enquiry hides the rope from view and presents it as a snake, so also non-enquiry into the Self hides It from being seen and this is called the veiling aspect of beginningless Ignorance. Now that the Self is realised, the so-called veiling is nowhere to be seen. Lo, the Self is here and now found to be the ever-shining witness! Wonder of Wonders! Like an apple in my hand I have now clearly realised the Self. Now Lord, Master, fortunately by your grace I am blessed; my task is finished!

46-50. On hearing the happy words of the blessed disciple, the master is pleased and speaks as follows: "Wise, worthy son, by God's Grace you have realised what one must realise! By His Grace your ignorance has ended by which even the learned unable to realise the Self, remain deluded. Happily you have got what is denied even to great scholars! Jointly all the merits of your past births have this day borne fruit! What can be the excellence of your merits that they have borne this fruit? Blessed are you! Ended is your task. You are an accomplished man. How wonderful that you have gained that which must be gained above all! In order to gain this, all the great works, vows, austerities, worship, yoga and other laborious tasks are undertaken; and only to know it all the trouble and worry of these processes is gone through. All your travail is now over. All the labour of your past births has this day borne fruit. Only in ignorance of this Supreme Thing all people lie sunk in the fathomless sea of repeated births and deaths. You have reached the shore beyond this sea. In ignorance of this all men mistake the body, senses etc., for the Self. You have found this Self.

Therefore you are really wise, truly intelligent. There can be no doubt of this.

So far you have really quested and realised the significance of "thou" in the text 'That thou art'. On the same lines pursue your enquiry and realise the significance of 'That' in the text."

51-52. *D.*: Please tell me, Master, the direct and intended meanings of 'That', just as for 'thou' they are the sheaths and the witness respectively.

M.: The whole universe is composed of the five factors — Being-shining-pleasing-name and form, the five sheaths and the external objects like a pot etc.

D.: Please explain the five factors of the external objects.

M.: That a pot is, is its 'being' aspect; that it appears, is its 'shining' aspect; that is dear to us, is its 'pleasing' aspect; 'pot' is its 'name' aspect; and its shape, its 'form' aspect. So it is with all objects. Of the five factors, the first three are characteristic of Brahman, and the remaining two, of the world.

The direct meaning of That is the world factors, i.e. names and forms; the intended meaning is Brahman — the composite of Being-shining-pleasing. Just as the beginningless Ignorance veils the self-evident difference between the sheaths and their witness, so also it veils the similar difference between the Being-shining-pleasing and the 'name and form' factors. Again as enquiry scatters away the veiling power, the Being-Knowledge-Bliss can be seen distinct from the 'name and form' aspect.

53-54. *D.*: What is the 'fruit' of knowing the direct and intended meanings of 'That' and 'Thou' in the text, 'That thou art.'

M.: The text speaks of the sameness of 'thou' the witness of the five sheaths and of 'That' i.e., Brahman or Being-Knowledge-Bliss lying beyond the names and forms in the universe. These are the intended meanings of 'thou' and 'That'. There can be no identity between the five sheaths of the

individual, the direct meaning of 'thou' and the names and forms in the universe, the direct meaning of 'That'. Hence it follows that the five sheaths and the names and forms are only illusory. To know the witness and Brahman to be one is the 'fruit' of knowledge.

D.: How can these be one and the same?

M.: Being only Being-Knowledge-Bliss, both of them must be the same. Just as the ether in a pot and that in the open have the same characteristics and are therefore identical, so also the witness and Brahman having the same characteristics, namely Being-Knowledge and Bliss, are one and the same. The ether of the pot is that of the open and *vice versa*; so also the witness is Brahman, and Brahman is the witness.

55-56. Inasmuch as Brahman is impartite perfect Wholeness, the witness being Brahman must also be impartite, perfect Wholeness. Therefore it is established that the Self is One unbroken Bliss.

D.: What is the 'fruit' of this knowledge?

M.: To reject the five sheaths and names and forms of objects as something inexpressible, only superimposed on the Reality, illusory to practise that the substratum, i.e., Brahman of Being-Knowledge-Bliss is the Self and to realise It as 'I am Brahman' with the resulting Supreme Bliss of being the Brahman, is the 'fruit' of this knowledge. Here ends the chapter on Reflection.

57. The wise student who carefully reads and practises it can realise himself as Brahman i.e., Being-Knowledge-Bliss.



CHAPTER VI

VASANAKSHAYA

THE ANNIHILATION OF LATENCIES

1. This chapter succeeds the five earlier ones on superimposition, its withdrawal, the requisites of the seeker, hearing, and reflection. To the disciple who after reflecting on the Self has gained direct knowledge, the master further says as follows.

2. Wise son, the shastras have nothing more to teach you; you have finished them. Henceforth you must meditate on the Self. The scriptures say: 'Dear! the Self must be heard of, reflected and meditated upon'. Having finished reflection, you must proceed with meditation. Now give up the shastras.

3-6. *D.*: Is it proper to give them up?

M.: Yes, it is proper. Now that by enquiry you have known what need be known, you can unhesitatingly give them up.

D.: But the shastras say that to the last moment of death, one should not give them up.

M.: Their purpose is to teach the truth. After it is gained, of what further use can they be? A further study will be so much waste of time and labour. Therefore leave them aside. Take to unbroken meditation.

D.: Is this statement supported by scriptures?

M.: Yes.

D.: How?

M.: They say: After repeatedly hearing from the master about the Self, reflecting on It and directly knowing It, the seeker should give up the shastras even as the pole used to stir up the corpse in the burning ground is finally consigned to the burning fire of the

corpse. From a study of the shastras let the seeker of Liberation gather an indirect knowledge of the Self and put it into practice by reflecting on It until by experiencing It a direct knowledge is gained; later like a gatherer of grains who takes the grain and rejects the chaff, let him leave the shastras aside. The man desirous of liberation should make use of shastras only to gain knowledge of the Self and then proceed to reflect on It; he should not be simply talking vedanta, nor even be thinking of it. For talk results only in so much strain on speech, similarly thinking on the mind, no useful purpose can be served by either. Therefore only know just what need be known and give up tiresome study. Controlling his speech and mind a sensible seeker should always engage in meditation. This is the teaching of the shastras.

7. Wise son, now that you have known what need be known from them, you should efface the impressions left by your studies.

D.: What constitutes these impressions?

M.: It is the inclination of the mind always to study vedantic literature, to understand the meaning of the texts, to commit them to memory and constantly be thinking of them. Since this inclination obstructs meditation, a wise man must overcome it with every effort. Next the latencies connected with the world (*lokavasana*) must be eliminated.

8. *D.*: What are these latencies?

M.: To think, this is my country, this is my family pedigree and this is the tradition. Should any one praise or censure any of these, the reactions of the mind denote the latencies connected with the world. Give them up. Later on, give up the latencies connected with the body also (*dehavasana*).

9-13. *D.*: What are they?

M.: To think oneself to be of such and such age, young or old and desire the full span of life with health, strength and good looks. Generally thoughts pertaining to the body indicate these latencies. Ambition in the world and love for body distract

the mind and prevent meditation on Brahman. Since all objects are ephemeral, they must be eschewed. Then the latencies connected with enjoyments (*bhogavasana*) must be given up.

D.: What are these?

M.: These are made up of thoughts like: this is good and I must have it; this is not so and let it leave me; now I have gained so much and let me gain more, and so on.

D.: How can this be overcome?

M.: By looking with disgust upon all enjoyments as on vomit or excreta and developing dispassion for them, this can be overcome. Dispassion is the only remedy for this mad craving. After this, the mind must be cleared of the six passions, namely, lust, anger, greed, delusion, pride and jealousy.

D.: How can this be done?

M.: By (*maitri, karuna, mudita* and *upeksha*) friendship with the holy, compassion for the afflicted, rejoicing in the joy of the virtuous and being indifferent to the shortcomings of the sinful.

Next must be effaced the latencies connected with the objects of the senses (*vishayavasana*) such as sound etc. These latencies are the running of the senses such as hearing etc., after their objects.

D.: How can these latencies be effaced?

M.: By a practice of the six-fold discipline consisting of *sama, dama, uparati, titiksha, samadhana* and *sraddha*, withdrawing the mind from going outwards, controlling the senses, not thinking of the objects of the senses, forbearance, fixing the mind on the Reality and faith.

Next all latencies connected with mutual attachments must be overcome.

14-15. *D*.: What are they?

M.: Though the senses are restrained, yet the mind always thinks of objects: 'there is that; there is this; it is such and such; it

is this-wise or otherwise' and so on. Because of brooding over objects, the mind gets attached to them, this constant brooding is called the latency connected with mental attachment.

D.: How can this be checked?

M.: By practising *uparati* which means desisting from all thoughts after concluding by proper reasoning that they are only fruitless daydreams.

16. When in the right manner, all this has been accomplished, the greatest evil-doer, namely the latency connected with wrong identity must be put an end to, even with great effort.

17. *D.*: What is this latency connected with wrong identity? (*viparita vasana*)

M.: Owing to beginningless Ignorance the non-Self is mistaken for the Self as 'I am the body' from time immemorial, this Ignorance is hardy and can be ended only by the practice of Brahman.

18-20. *D.*: What is this practice?

M.: It consists in discarding the body, senses etc., as being non-Self and always remembering that 'I am Brahman', remaining as consciousness witnessing the insentient sheaths. Meditating on Brahman in solitude, speaking of or teaching only Brahman in the company of others, not to speak or think of anything but It, but always one-pointedly to think of Brahman, is the practice.

तच्चिन्तनं तत्कथनमन्योन्यं तत्प्रबोधनम् ।
एतदेकपरत्वं च तदभ्यासं विदुर्बुधाई ॥

Yoga Vasishta: Utpathi Prakaranam
Leelopakhyanam.

So say the wise. By this transcend the ego and then proceed to eliminate the idea of 'mine'.

21-22. *D.*: What is the nature of this idea?

M.: It consists in the single concept of 'mine' in relation to the body or whatever pertains to it, such as name, form, clothing, caste, conduct or professions of life.

D.: How does this go away?

M.: By a steadfast meditation on the Reality.

D.: How?

M.: Always to be aware that the body etc., its interests and effects, enjoyments, activities etc., are only figments of ignorance on pure knowledge i.e., the Self, that like the appearance of silver on nacre, ornaments in gold, water in mirage, blueness in the sky or waves in water, all but the Self are only false presentations or illusory modes of the Self. In reality there is nothing but our 'Self'. Next the sense of differentiation (*bheda vasana*) must go.

23-25. *D.*: What is this sense of differentiation?

M.: It consists in ideas like: "I am the witness of this; all that is seen is only insentient and illusory; here is the world; these are the individuals; this one is the disciple and the other, the master; this is Isvara, and so on." This must go by a practice of non-duality.

This practice is to remain non-dual, solid Being-Knowledge-Bliss, untainted and free from thoughts of reality or unreality, ignorance or its illusory effects, and internal or external differentiation. This is accomplished by a constant practice of modeless (*nirvikalpa) samadhi*. Here remains the experience of Brahman only.

After leaving the sense of differentiation far behind, the attachment to non-duality must later be given up.

26-27. *D.*: How is this to be done?

M.: Even this state must finally pass into untellable and unthinkable Reality absolutely free from modes and even non-duality. The Bliss of Liberation is only this and nothing more. When the mind is cleared of all latent impurities, it

remains untainted, crystal-clear so that it cannot be said to exist or not to exist and it becomes one with Reality, transcending speech and thought. This unmoded, untainted fixity of the mind is known as Realisation or Liberation while alive.

28. Though direct knowledge of the Self has been gained, yet until this Realisation ensues, to be liberated while alive one should always meditate on Brahman with proper control of mind and senses.

Thus ends this chapter.



CHAPTER VII

SAKSHATKARA

REALISATION

1. In the foregoing chapter it was said that direct knowledge must first be gained and then the latent tendencies of the mind wiped out so that Brahman may be realised. Now Realisation is dealt with.

The master says: Wise son, now that you have gained direct knowledge by enquiry into the Self, you should proceed with meditation.

2. *D.*: Master, now that I have gained direct knowledge by enquiry and my task is finished why should I meditate further and to what end?

3-4. *M.*: Though by reflection, direct knowledge of the Self has been gained, Brahman cannot be realised without meditation. In order to experience 'I am Brahman' you must practise meditation.

5-6.: *D.*: You ask me to pursue meditation for realising Brahman. I have already gained direct knowledge by enquiry into the sacred text. Why should I now practise meditation?

M.: If you mean to say that enquiry into the sacred text results in realising Brahman, who can deny it? No one. Truly this enquiry must end in the realisation of Brahman.

Let us now enquire into the meaning of the text. Whose identity with whom is implied in it? It must be of the consciousness witnessing the five sheaths of the individual, the implied meaning of 'thou' with Brahman, the implied meaning of 'That'; it cannot be of the *Jiva*, i.e., the personal soul with Brahman. By enquiry the identity of the witnessing

consciousness with Brahman has certainly been found. Of what use can this identity of the witness with Brahman be to you?

7. *D*.: On enquiry into the meaning of the sacred text, when one has realised that the witness is Brahman and *vice versa*, how can you raise the question 'Of what use can it be to the person?' Its use is evident. Formerly the seeker was ignorant of the identity and now by enquiry he is aware of it.

M.: By enquiry you have certainly known that the witness is Brahman and that the unbroken, all-perfect Brahman is the witness. Still this knowledge is not the end and cannot serve your purpose. Suppose a poor beggar who was ignorant of the fact that a king residing in a fort was the emperor of the world, later knew it. How does this newly acquired knowledge improve his position? It cannot serve any useful purpose for him.

8. *D*.: Before enquiry, ignorance prevails. After enquiry, knowledge is gained that the witness is Brahman. Now knowledge has taken the place of ignorance. This is the use.

M.: How does this affect the fact? Whether you have known it or not, the witness ever remains Brahman. Your knowledge of the fact has not made Brahman, the witness. Whether the poor beggar knew it or not, the king in the fort was the emperor. His knowledge did not make an emperor of the king in the fort. Now that you have known the witness to be Brahman, what has happened to you? Tell me. There can be no change in you.

9. *D*.: Why not? There is a difference. The sacred text teaches 'That thou art'. On enquiring into its significance I have found that the witness of the five sheaths in me is the same as Brahman. From this I have known that I am Brahman, which forms another sacred text. To me who was ignorant of the witness being the same as Brahman, this knowledge has dawned, with the result that I have realised Brahman.

M.: How can you claim to have realised Brahman? If by the text 'I am Brahman' you understand yourself to be Brahman,

who is this 'I' but the *Jiva*, the individual soul or the ego? How can the ego be Brahman? Just as even with his knowledge of the king, the beggar cannot himself be the king, so also the changeful ego can never be identical with the changeless Brahman.

10-14. *D.*: Certainly so. But on enquiring 'Who am I?' it becomes plain that by non-enquiry the unchanging witness had mistaken the changing ego for himself. Now he knows 'I am not the changing ego but remain its unchanging conscious witness'. Now it is but right that the witness should say, 'I am Brahman'. What can be discordant in this?

M.: How can you hold that the witness says 'I am Brahman?' Does the unchanging witness or the changing ego say so? If you say that it is the witness, you are wrong. For the witness remains unchanging as the witness of the 'false-I'. He is not the conceit itself. Otherwise he cannot have the quality of being the witness for he will himself be changing. Being unchanging the witness is free from the least trace of any notion such as 'I' or Brahman and cannot therefore know 'I am Brahman'. There is no ground for your contention that the witness says so.

D.: Then who knows 'I am Brahman'?

M.: From what has been said before, it must follow that the individual soul, the *jiva*, or the 'false-I' must have this knowledge.

D.: How does this follow?

M.: In order to be free from the repeated cycle of births and deaths, the ignorant man is obliged to practise the knowledge 'I am Brahman'. There is no ignorance for the witness. When there is no ignorance, there can be no knowledge either. Only the ignorant must seek knowledge. Who but the 'false-I' can be the subject of ignorance or of knowledge? It is self-evident that the witnessing Self being the substratum on which knowledge or ignorance appears, must itself be free from them. On the contrary the 'false-I' is known to possess knowledge or ignorance.

If you ask him 'Do you know the Self witnessing you?' And he will answer 'Who is that witness? I do not know him'. Here the ignorance of the 'false-I' is obvious.

On hearing the vedanta that there is an inner witness to him, indirectly he knows that the Self is his witness. Then enquiring into the Self, the veil of Ignorance that It does not shine forth, is drawn off and directly he knows the witnessing Self. Here again the knowledge of the 'false-I' is also clear.

It is only the *jiva* and not the witness who has the knowledge or ignorance that there is, or is not, the inner witness. You must now admit that the *jiva* has the knowledge that 'I am Brahman'. Now for the reason that the changing *Jiva* has become aware of the unchanging witness, he cannot be the same as the witness. Because he had seen him, the poor beggar cannot be the king. So also the changing *Jiva* cannot be the witness. Without being the witnessing Self, the changing entity cannot be Brahman. So this experience 'I am Brahman' is impossible.

15. *D.*: How can you say that merely seeing the witness, I cannot know that I am the witness? Ignorant of his true being as the substratum or the witnessing consciousness, the *Jiva* moves about as the 'false-I'. However on a careful enquiry into his true nature he knows the witness and identifies himself as the witness who is well-known to be the unbroken, all perfect Brahman. Thus the experience, 'I am Brahman', is real.

M.: What you say is true provided that the *jiva* can identify himself as the witness. The witness is undoubtedly Brahman. But how can the mere sight of the witness help the *jiva* merge himself into the witness? Unless the *jiva* remains the witness, he cannot know himself as the witness. Merely by seeing the king, a poor beggar cannot know himself to be the king. But when he becomes the king, he can know himself as the king. Similarly the *jiva*, remaining changeful and without becoming the unchanging witness, cannot know himself as the witness. If he

cannot be the witness, how can he be the unbroken, all-perfect Brahman? He cannot be. Just as at the sight of the king in a fort, a poor beggar cannot become king and much less sovereign of the universe, so also only at the sight of the witness who is much finer than ether and free from traffic with triads, such as the knower, knowledge and the known, eternal, pure, aware, free, real, supreme and blissful, the *jiva* cannot become the witness, much less the unbroken, all-perfect Brahman, and cannot know 'I am Brahman'.

16. *D.*: If so, how is it that the two words of the same case ending (*samanadhikarana*) — 'I' and 'Brahman' — are placed in apposition in the sacred text 'I am Brahman'? According to grammatical rules the *sruti* clearly proclaims the same rank to the *jiva* and Brahman. How is this to be explained?

17-18. *M.*: The common agreement between two words in apposition is of two kinds: *mukhya* and *badha* i.e., unconditional and conditional. Here the *sruti* does not convey the unconditional meaning.

D.: What is this unconditional meaning?

M.: The ether in a jar has the same characteristics as that in another jar, or in a room, or in the open. Therefore the one ether is the same as the other. Similarly with air, fire, water, earth, sunlight etc. Again the god in one image is the same as that in another and the witnessing consciousness in one being is the same as that in another. The *sruti* does not mean this kind of identity between the *jiva* and Brahman, but means the other, the conditional meaning.

D.: What is it?

M.: Discarding all appearances, the sameness of the substratum in all.

D.: Please explain this.

M.: 'I am Brahman' means that, after discarding the 'false-I', only the residual being or the pure consciousness that

is left over can be Brahman — It is absurd to say that, without discarding but retaining the individuality, the *jiva*, on seeing Brahman but not becoming Brahman, can know himself as Brahman. A poor beggar must first cease to be beggar and rule over a state in order to know himself as king; a man desirous of god-hood first drowns himself in the Ganges and leaving this body, becomes himself a celestial being; by his extraordinary one-pointed devotion a devotee leaves off his body and merges into god, before he can know himself to be god. In all these cases when the beggar knows himself to be king, or the man to be celestial being, or the devotee to be god, they cannot retain their former individualities and also identify themselves as the superior beings. In the same way, the seeker of Liberation must first cease to be an individual before he can rightly say 'I am Brahman'. This is the significance of the sacred text. Without completely losing one's individuality one cannot be Brahman. Therefore to realise Brahman, the loss of the individuality is a *sine qua non*.

D.: The changeful individual soul cannot be Brahman. Even though he rids himself of the individuality, how can he become Brahman?

19. *M.*: Just as a maggot losing its nature, becomes a wasp. A maggot is brought by a wasp and kept in its hive. From time to time the wasp visits the hive and stings the maggot so that it always remains in dread of its tormentor. The constant thought of the wasp transforms the maggot into a wasp. Similarly, constantly meditating on Brahman, the seeker loses his original nature and becomes himself Brahman. This is the realisation of Brahman.

20. *D.*: This cannot illustrate the point, for the *jiva* is changing and falsely presented on the pure Being, Brahman, which is the Reality. When a false thing has lost its falsity, the whole entity is gone; how can it become the Reality?

21. *M*.: Your doubt, how a superimposed falsity turns out to be its substratum, the Reality, is easily cleared. See how the nacre-silver ceases to be silver and remains as nacre, or a rope-snake ceasing to be snake remains ever as rope. Similarly, with the *jiva* superimposed on the Reality, Brahman.

D.: These are illusions which are not conditioned (*nirupadhika bhrama*) whereas the appearance of the *jiva* is conditioned (*sopadhika bhrama*) and appears as a superimposition only on the internal faculty, the mind. So long as there is the mind, there will also be the *jiva* or the individual, and the mind is the result of past karma. As long as this remains unexhausted, the *jiva* must also be present. Just as the reflection of one's face is contingent upon the mirror or water in front, so is individuality, on the mind, the effect of one's past karma. How can this individuality be done away with?

M.: Undoubtedly individuality lasts as long as the mind exists. Just as the reflected image disappears with the removal of the mirror in front, so also individuality can be effaced by stilling the mind by meditation.

D.: The individuality being thus lost, the *jiva* becomes void. Having become void, how can he become Brahman?

M.: The *jiva* is only a false appearance not apart from its substratum. It is conditional on ignorance, or the mind, on whose removal the *jiva* is left as the substratum as in the case of a dream-person.

22-23. *D*.: How?

M.: The waking man functions as the dreamer (*taijasa*) in his dreams. The dreamer is neither identical with nor separate from the waking man (*visva*). For the man sleeping happy on his bed has not moved out whereas as the dreamer he had wandered about in other places, busy with many things. The wanderer of the dream cannot be the man resting in his bed. Can he then be different? Not so either. For on waking from

sleep, he says 'In my dream I went to so many places, did so many things and was happy or otherwise'. Clearly he identifies himself with the experiencer of the dream. Moreover no other experiencer can be seen.

D.: Not different from nor identical with the waking experiencer, who is this dream-experiencer?

M.: Being a creation of the illusory power of sleep the dream-experiencer is only an illusion like the snake on a rope. With the finish of the illusory power of dream, the dreamer vanishes only to wake up as the real substratum, the original individual self of the waking state. Similarly the empirical self, the *jiva* is neither the unchanging Brahman nor other than It. In the internal faculty, the mind, fancied by ignorance, the Self is reflected and the reflection presents itself as the empirical, changing and individual self. This is a superimposed false appearance. Since the superimposition cannot remain apart from its substratum, this empirical self cannot be other than the absolute Self.

D.: Who is this?

M.: Successively appearing in the ignorance-created mind and disappearing in deep sleep, swoon etc., this empirical self is inferred to be only a phantom. Simultaneously with the disappearance of the medium or the limiting adjunct (*upadhi*), the mind, the *jiva* becomes the substratum, the True Being or Brahman. Destroying the mind, the *jiva* can know himself as Brahman.

24. *D.*: With the destruction of the limiting adjunct, the *jiva* being lost, how can he say 'I am Brahman'?

M.: When the limiting ignorance of dream vanishes, the dreamer is not lost, but emerges as the waking experiencer. So also when the mind is lost, the *jiva* emerges as his true Being — Brahman. Therefore as soon as the mind is annihilated leaving no trace behind, the *jiva* will surely realise 'I am the Being-Knowledge-Bliss, non-dual Brahman; Brahman is I, the Self'.

D.: In that case the state must be without any mode like that of deep sleep. How can there be the experience 'I am Brahman'?

M.: Just as at the end of a dream, the dreamer rising up as the waking experiencer says 'All along I was dreaming that I wandered in strange places, etc., but I am only lying down on the bed,' or a madman cured of his madness remains pleased with himself, or a patient cured of his illness wonders at his past sufferings, or a poor man on becoming a king, forgets or laughs at his past penurious state, or a man on becoming a celestial being enjoys the new bliss, or a devotee on uniting with the Lord of his devotion remains blissful, so also the *jiva* on emerging as Brahman wonders how all along being only Brahman he was moving about as a helpless being imagining a world, god and individuals, asks himself what became of all those fancies and how he now remaining all alone as Being-Knowledge-Bliss free from any differentiation, internal or external, certainly experiences the Supreme Bliss of Brahman. Thus realisation is possible for the *jiva* only on the complete destruction of the mind and not otherwise.

25. *D.*: Experience can be of the mind only. When it is destroyed, who can have the experience 'I am Brahman'?

M.: You are right. The destruction of the mind is of two kinds: (*rupa* and *arupa*) i.e., in its form-aspect and in its formless aspect. All this while I have been speaking of destroying the former mind. Only when it ceases to be in its formless aspect, experience will be impossible, as you say.

D.: Please explain those two forms of the mind and their destruction.

M.: The latent impressions (*vasanas*) manifesting as modes (*vrittis*) constitute the form-aspect of the mind. Their effacement is the destruction of this aspect of mind. On the other hand, on the latencies perishing, the supervening state of *samadhi* in which

there is no stupor of sleep, no vision of the world, but only the Being-Knowledge-Bliss is the formless aspect of mind. The loss of this amounts to the loss of the formless aspect of mind. Should this also be lost, there can be no experience — not even of the realisation of Supreme Bliss.

D.: When does this destruction take place?

M.: In the disembodiment of the liberated being. It cannot happen so long as he is alive in the body. The mind is lost in its form-aspect but not in its formless one of Brahman. Hence the experience of Bliss for the sage, liberated while alive.

26-27. *D.*: In brief what is Realisation?

M.: To destroy the mind in its form-aspect functioning as the limiting adjunct to the individual, to recover the pure mind in its formless aspect whose nature is only Being-Knowledge-Bliss and to experience 'I am Brahman' is Realisation.

D.: Is this view supported by others as well?

M.: Yes. Sri Sankaracharya has said: 'Just as in the ignorant state, unmindful of the identity of the Self with Brahman, one truly believes oneself to be the body, so also after knowing to be free from the illusion of the body being the Self, and becoming unaware of the body, undoubtingly and unmistakably always to experience the Self as the Being-Knowledge-Bliss identical with Brahman is called Realisation'. 'To be fixed as the Real Self is Realisation', say the sages.

28. *D.*: Who says it and where?

29. *M.*: Vasishta has said in *Yoga Vasishta*: 'Just as the mind in a stone remains quiet and without any mode, so also like the interior of the stone to remain without any mode and thought free, but not in slumber nor aware of duality, is to be fixed as the Real Self'.

30-31. Therefore without effacing the form-aspect of the mind and remaining fixed as the true Self, how can anyone realise 'I am Brahman'? It cannot be. Briefly put, one should

still the mind to destroy one's individuality and thus remain fixed as the Real Self of Being-Knowledge-Bliss, so that in accordance with the text 'I am Brahman' one can realise Brahman. On the other hand, on the strength of the direct knowledge of Brahman to say 'I am Brahman' is as silly as a poor beggar on seeing the king declaring himself to be the king. Not to claim by words but to be fixed as the Real Self and know 'I am Brahman' is Realisation of Brahman.

32. *D.*: How will the sage be, who has undoubtingly, unmistakably and steadily realised Brahman?

M.: Always remaining as the Being-Knowledge-Bliss, non-dual, all-perfect, all-alone, unitary Brahman, he will be unshaken even while experiencing the results of the past karma now in fruition. (*prarabdha*).

33-35. *D.*: Being only Brahman, how can he be subject to the experiences and activities resulting from past karma?

M.: For the sage undoubtingly and unmistakably fixed as the real Self, there can remain no past karma. In its absence there can be no fruition, consequently no experience nor any activity. Being only without mode Brahman, there can be no experiencer, no experiences and no objects of experience. Therefore no past karma can be said to remain for him.

D.: Why should we not say that his past karma is now working itself out?

M.: Who is the questioner? He must be a deluded being and not a sage.

D.: Why?

M.: Experience implies delusion; without the one, the other cannot be. Unless there is an object, no experience is possible. All objective knowledge is delusion. There is no duality in Brahman. Certainly all names and forms are by ignorance superimposed on Brahman. Therefore the experiencer must be ignorant only and not a sage. Having already enquired into the

nature of things and known them to be illusory names and forms born of ignorance, the sage remains fixed as Brahman and knows all to be only Brahman. Who is to enjoy what? No one and nothing. Therefore there is no past karma left nor present enjoyments nor any activity for the wise one.

36-37. *D.*: However we do not see him free from the experience of past karma; on the other hand he goes through them like an ordinary ignorant man. How is this to be explained?

M.: In his view there is nothing like past karma, enjoyments or activities.

D.: What is his view?

M.: For him there is nothing but the pure, untainted Ether of Absolute Knowledge.

D.: But how is he seen to pass through experiences?

M.: Only the others see him so. He is not aware of it.

38-39. *D.*: Is this view confirmed by other authorities?

M.: In *Viveka Chudamani*, Sri Acharya has said 'Simultaneous with the dawn of knowledge, ignorance with all its effects flees away from the sage and so he cannot be an enjoyer. However, the ignorant wonder how the sage continues to live in the body and act like others. From the ignorant point of view, the scriptures have admitted the momentum of past karma, but not from the point of view of the sage himself'.

40. *D.*: If truly he is no enjoyer, why should he appear to others to be so?

M.: Owing to their ignorance, the others regard him as an enjoyer.

41-43. *D.*: Can this be so?

M.: Yes. To the ignorant only the non-dual, pure Ether of Absolute Knowledge manifests Itself as various beings, the world, God, different names and forms, I, you, he, it, this and that. Like the illusion of a man on a post, silver on nacre, snake on rope, utensils in clay, or ornaments in gold, different names

and forms on the Ether of Knowledge delude the ignorant. The sage who, by practice of knowledge, has destroyed ignorance and gained true knowledge, will always remain only as the Ether of Absolute Knowledge, unaware of enjoyments of fruits of actions or of worldly activities. Being That, he can be aware as the Ether of Knowledge only. Nevertheless, owing to their ignorance others see him otherwise, i.e., as an embodied being acting like themselves. But he remains only pure, untainted ether, without any activity.

44-46. *D.*: Can it be illustrated how the sage remaining himself inactive, appears active to others?

M.: Two friends sleep side by side. One of them reposes in dreamless sleep whereas the other dreams that he is wandering about with his friend. Though in complete repose, this man appears active to the dreamer. Similarly although the sage remains inactive as the blissful Ether of Absolute Knowledge, he appears to be active to those who in ignorance remain always caught up in names and forms. It must now be clear that the realised sage being the pure Self is not involved in action but only appears to be so.

47-48. *D.*: Not that there are no experiences whatever for the realised sage, but they are only illusory. For Knowledge can destroy the karma already stored and the future karma (*sanchita* and *agamya)* but not the karma which having already begun to bear fruit (*prarabdha*) must exhaust itself. As long as it is there, even from his own point of view, activities will persist, though illusory.

M.: This cannot be. In which state do these three kinds of karma exist — knowledge or ignorance? Owing to delusion; it must be said 'they are operative only in ignorance.' But in knowledge there being no delusion, there is no *prarabdha*. Always remaining undeluded as the transcendental Self, how can the delusion of the fruition of karma occur to one? Can the

delusion of dream-experience return to him who has awakened from it? To the disillusioned sage there can be no experience of karma. Always he remains unaware of the world but aware of the Self as the non-dual, unbroken, unitary, solid, without any mode Ether of Absolute Knowledge, and of nothing besides.

49. *D.*: The *Upanishad* admits past karma in the Text 'As long as his past karma is not exhausted the sage cannot be disembodied, and there will be illusory activities for him'.

M.: You are not right. The activities and experiences of the fruits of action and the world seem illusory to the practiser of Knowledge and they completely vanish to the accomplished sage. The practiser practises as follows: 'I am the witness; the objects and activities are seen by and known to me. I remain conscious and these are insentient. Only Brahman is real; all else is unreal.' The practice ends with the realisation that all these are insentient consisting of names and forms and cannot exist in the past, present or future, therefore they vanish. There being nothing to witness, witnessing ends by merging into Brahman. Only the Self is now left over as Brahman. For the sage aware of the Self only, there can remain only Brahman and no thought of karma, or worldly activities.

D.: Why then does the *sruti* mention past karma in this connection?

M.: It does not refer to the accomplished sage.

D.: Whom does it refer to?

M.: Only to the ignorant.

D.: Why?

M.: Although from his own point of view, the sage has no enjoyment of the fruits of actions, yet the ignorant are deluded on seeing his activities. Even if told there is no enjoyment for him, the ignorant will not accept it but continue to doubt how the sage remains active. To remove such doubt, the *sruti* says to the ignorant that *prarabdha* still remains for the sage. But it

does not say to the sage 'You have *prarabdha*'. Therefore the *sruti* which speaks of residual *prarabdha*, for the sage, really does not speak of it from his point of view.

50-51. *D.*: Realisation can result only after complete annihilation of individuality. But who will agree to sacrifice his individuality?

M.: Being eager to cross over the ocean of the misery of repeated births and deaths and realise the pure, eternal Brahman, one will readily sacrifice one's individuality. Just as the man desirous of becoming a celestial being, willingly consigns himself to the fire or the Ganges in order to end this human life and emerge as a god, so also the seeker of Liberation will by practice of *sravana, manana*, and *nidhidhyasana*, (i.e., hearing, reflection and meditation) sacrifice his individuality to become the Supreme Brahman.

52. Here ends the Chapter on Realisation.

Diligently studying and understanding this, the seeker will kill the mind which is the limiting adjunct that causes individuality to manifest and ever live as Brahman only.



CHAPTER VIII

MANONASA

THE EXTINCTION OF THE MIND

1. In the previous chapter, having taught the realisation of the non-dual Brahman, the master now treats of the extinction of the mind as the sole means of realising Brahman.

M.: Wise son, leave off the mind which is the limiting adjunct giving rise to individuality, thus causing the great malady of repeated births and deaths, and realise Brahman.

2. *D.*: Master, how can the mind be extinguished? Is it not very hard to do so? Is not the mind very powerful, restive and ever vacillating? How can one relinquish the mind?

3-4. *M.*: To give up the mind is very easy, as easy as crushing a delicate flower, or removing a hair from butter or winking your eyes. Doubt it not. For a self-possessed resolute seeker not bewitched by the senses, but by strong dispassion grown indifferent to external objects, there cannot be the least difficulty in giving up the mind.

D.: How is it so easy?

M.: The question of difficulty arises only if there is a mind to leave off. Truly speaking, there is no mind. When told 'There is a ghost here' an ignorant child is deluded into believing the existence of the non-existent ghost, and is subject to fear, misery and troubles, similarly in the untainted Brahman by fancying things that are not, as this and that, a false entity known as the *mind* arises seemingly real, functioning as this and that, and proving uncontrollable and mighty to the unwary, whereas to the self-possessed, discerning seeker who knows its nature, it is easy to relinquish. Only a fool ignorant of its nature says it is most difficult.

5-10. *D.*: What is the nature of mind?

M.: To think this and that. In the absence of thought, there can be no mind. On the thoughts being extinguished the mind will remain only in name like the horn of a hare; it will vanish as a non-entity like a barren woman's son, or a hare's horn, or a flower in the sky. This is also mentioned in the *Yoga Vasishta*.

D.: How?

M.: Vasishta says: 'Listen, O Rama, there is nothing to speak of as *mind*. Just as the ether exists without form, so also the mind exists as the blank insentience. It remains only in name; it has no form. It is not outside, nor is it in the heart. Yet like the ether, the mind though formless fills all'.

D.: How can this be?

M.: Wherever thought arises as this and that, there is the mind.

D.: If there be mind wherever there is thought, are thought and mind different?

M.: Thought is the index of the mind. When a thought arises mind is inferred. In the absence of thought, there can be no mind. Therefore mind is nothing but thought. Thought is itself mind.

D.: What is 'thought'?

M.: 'Thought' is imagination. The thought-free state is Bliss Supreme (*Sivasvarupa*). Thoughts are of two kinds; the recalling of things experienced and unexperienced.

11. *D.*: To begin with, please tell me what is 'thought'.

M.: Sages say that it is nothing but to think of any external object as this or that, is or is not, this-wise or that-wise, etc.

12-13. *D.*: How is this to be classified under the heads of things experienced and unexperienced?

M.: Of objects of senses, such as sound, already experienced as 'I saw — I heard — I touched etc.' to think of them as having been seen, heard, touched is the recollection of things

already experienced. To call to mind unexperienced objects of senses is the thought of unexperienced things.

14. *D.*: That thoughts pertain to things already experienced is understandable. But how to think of those not so experienced unless they are reminiscences of things already experienced? One can never think of things not experienced. How then can we say — to think of things not already experienced is 'thought'?

15. *M.*: Yes, it is quite possible. To think of things not experienced is also thought. Objects unexperienced appear as such only after thinking.

D.: How can the things not already experienced come within the orbit of thought?

M.: By the process of positive and negative induction (*anvaya, vyatireka*), all mental imagery must be said to be thought-forms, whether already experienced or not.

16-17. *D.*: How do you apply the positive and negative induction here?

M.: Whether existent or non-existent, already experienced or not so experienced, whatever and however something is thought of, it is apprehended. The mere thought of it amounts to apprehension. This is the positive induction.

Real or unreal, experienced or not, however it may be, whatever is not thought of, is not apprehended. This is negative induction. From this process also it follows that thought is apprehension.

18. *D.*: How can mere thought of anything be its apprehension also? Things are apprehended directly by the senses or by recall of past experiences to the mind. On the other hand, things unheard of or unseen cannot be apprehended by simple thinking of them. Therefore the logical conclusion that mere thought of anything is its apprehension, does not hold.

M.: You are not right. How can you say that things not directly cognised by the senses are not apprehended? The

pleasures of heaven though not already enjoyed, are vividly pictured in our minds. This is owing to our knowledge of the shastras which depict them. Though not experienced they appear to us as delights not experienced.

19-21. *D.*: Things experienced can be thought of and cognised. But things unexperienced cannot be cognised even if thought of.

M.: Now listen. Experienced or unexperienced things can be cognised. As things already experienced at a distant place are thought of and cognised, so also things unexperienced can be thought of and cognised, on hearing from others, such as the Mount Meru of bright gold.

Though eyes and ears are closed, yet visions and sounds can be thought of and cognised. Though in dark, one can still think of an object and cognise it. Even without eyes and ears the blind and the deaf cognise forms and sounds on thinking of them. Therefore, already known or unknown, all that is thought of can be apprehended. This is the affirmative proposition.

22. *D.*: What is negation?

M.: In the absence of mind, in swoons, deep sleep or trance there is no thinking and consequently nothing is seen. Not only in these states but also in waking, if one does not think, there is no phenomenon.

23-25. *D.*: Even in waking it cannot be so. Objects of direct cognition even if not thought of, are apprehended.

M.: No. What you say is not true. Everyday experience teaches us otherwise.

D.: How?

M.: When a man is keenly attentive to something, he does not answer when someone calls. Later he says 'I was intent on something else; I could not hear; I could not see; I was not aware' etc. It is therefore clear that without attention objects of direct cognition cannot be apprehended.

26-28. *D.*: Cannot the objects of direct cognition be apprehended, without attention?

M.: Though in direct contact with the senses, objects cannot be cognised without attention to them. Though the necklace is in contact with the body, because the wearer is not attentive, its presence is not known; being unaware of it, she even misses the ornament and searches for it. Though in touch with the body of the wearer the necklace is missed for want of attention.

Again a patient writhing with pain can be made to forget it by drawing his attention to something else; similarly the grief of bereavement is forgotten by attention being directed to other matters of interest.

It is obvious that without attention, even the objects of direct cognition cannot be recognised.

29-31. From this it follows that the cognition of anything experienced or not, however it may be, can only be of the form of thought. Therefore the perception of things has been signified by various terms in Vedanta, such as cognition as this and that, will, thought, mode of mind, intellect, latency, reflected consciousness, the heart-knot, the seen, illusion, the individual, the world, the all, God etc.

D.: Where has it been said that this knowledge is the all? On the other hand it is said that maya became the all.

M.: Yes. Maya is the knowledge which is spoken of. Only this objective knowledge goes under the different names, maya, *avidya*, bondage, impurity, darkness, ignorance, the mind, the cycles of repeated births and deaths etc.

D.: Be it so, what has this got to do with the extinction of the mind?

M.: Listen. You must understand that the knowledge signified by all these terms is only the mind.

32-33. *D.*: Who else says so?

M.: Vasishta has said to Rama: 'Whatever objective knowledge manifests as this and that, or not this and not that, or in any other manner, it is only the mind. The mind is nothing but this manifest knowledge'.

34. *D.*: Let it be so. How can the mind be extinguished?

M.: To forget everything is the ultimate means. But for thought, the world does not arise. Do not think and it will not arise. When nothing arises in the mind, the mind itself is lost. Therefore do not think of anything, forget all. This is the best way to kill the mind.

35-37. *D.*: Has anyone else said so before?

M.: Vasishta said so to Rama thus: 'Efface thoughts of all kinds, of things enjoyed, not enjoyed, or otherwise. Like wood or stone, remain free from thoughts.

Rama: Should I altogether forget everything?

Vasishta: Exactly; altogether forget everything and remain like wood or stone.

Rama: The result will be dullness like that of stones or wood.

Vasishta: Not so. All this is only illusion. Forgetting the illusion, you are freed from it. Though seeming dull, you will be the Bliss Itself. Your intellect will be altogether clear and sharp. Without getting entangled in worldly life, but appearing active to others remain as the very Bliss of Brahman and be happy. Unlike the blue colour of the sky, let not the illusion of the world revive in the pure Ether of Consciousness-Self. To forget this illusion is the sole means to kill the mind and remain as Bliss. Though Shiva, Vishnu, or Brahman Himself should instruct you, realisation is not possible without this one means. Without forgetting everything, fixity as the Self is impossible. Therefore altogether forget everything.'

38-39. *D.*: Is it not very difficult to do so?

M.: Though for the ignorant it is difficult, for the discerning few it is very easy. Never think of anything but the unbroken unique Brahman. By a long practice of this, you will easily forget the non-self. It cannot be difficult to remain still without thinking anything. Let not thoughts arise in the mind; always think of Brahman. In this way all worldly thoughts will vanish and thought of Brahman alone will remain. When this becomes steady, forget even this, and without thinking 'I am Brahman', be the very Brahman. This cannot be difficult to practise.

40. Now my wise son, follow this advice; cease thinking of anything but Brahman. By this practice your mind will be extinct; you will forget all and remain as pure Brahman.

41. He who studies this chapter and follows the instructions contained therein, will soon be Brahman Itself!



APPENDIX I

Stages of	*Viveka*	*Vairagya*	*Uparati*	*Mumukshutva*
Cause	Arises only in a purified mind.	Arises from *Viveka*.	Results from *Ashtanga yoga*.	Begins with *Sat-sanga,* i.e. association with realised sages.
Nature	To be convinced that Brahman alone is real and all else false.	Is to renounce the world and have no desire for anything in it.	Consists in restraining the mind.	Is to yearn for *mukti*.
Effect	Always to remember this truth.	Is to turn away in disgust from all enjoyments.	Is to cease from worldly activities.	Its effect is to remain with one's master.
Limit	To be settled unswervingly in the truth that only Brahman is real.	Is treating with contempt all pleasures — earthly or heavenly.	Ends in forgetting the worlds because activities have ceased.	Ends in giving up of all shastras and performance of religious rites.
Fruit	The unreality of *jagat* results in *Vairagya*.	Peace.		

APPENDIX II

Stages of	*Jnana* (Supreme Knowledge)	*Sravana*	*Manana*
Cause	Arises from *sravana, manana, nidhidhyasana Samadhi.*	Results from *viveka, vairagya, uparati, mumukshutva.*	Arises from *viveka,* i.e., indirect knowledge.
Nature	It is the blissful state of *Shanti* in which Brahman alone exists and nothing else.	Always to be hearing of the non-dual Brahman.	Enquiring into the truth of the *advaitatma.*
Effect	Non-revival of the ego.	Removal of *astattavarana.*	Removal of *abhanavarana.*
Limit	As firmly convinced by realising अहंब्रह्मास्मि as the present देहोऽहं idea.	Non-recurrence of *astattavarana.*	Non-recurrence of *abhanavarana.*
Fruit	जीवनमुक्ति *jivanmukti.*	*Paroksha jnana* (indirect knowledge) i.e. capacity for distinguishing the real from the unreal.	*Aparoksha jnana* (direct knowledge) i.e. clearly to distinguish the self from the ego.